■ METRO / A22
MMDA identifies top 10 'killer zones' in metropolis

■ BUSINESS / B1
Peso still gaining: 51.22 to $; Feb. 'hot money' also hit 11-month high

■ NEWS / A2
Erap foundation faces probe for P8-M donation

■ NEWS / A2
Ombudsman defies SC, doesn't act on multibillion Comelec graft case

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, March 3, 2006 ■■ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 85 P18 website: www.inq7.net

For the poor, daily life is a 'state of emergency'

PINOY TIME SECURITY guard Roy Agustina sat naged to relax and nothing pityesod from a demolished shanty beside a railroad track in Manila, while his wife listened to radio news about President Macapagal-Arroyo's

FOR THE POORS A6

Senior US diplomat sees GMA, also meets FVR, Cory

By Volt Contreras

A SENIOR US DIPLOMAT YESTERDAY SAID Washington welcomed President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement that she may soon lift her emergency declaration and expressed hope that the Philippine political crisis would be resolved in a democratic context.

US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian

SENIOR A6

GMA advised to lift 1017

3 top security officials one in saying that threat has passed

By Christine O. Avendaño

UNLESS TROUBLE erupts in the next 24 hours, the three officials who make up the security cluster in the Cabinet are prepared to recommend the lifting of emergency rule to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao yesterday said at a news conference in Malacañang that the threats to national security had "subsided." "Stranded" and "denied off" when the President declared a state of national emergency on Feb. 24 purportedly to head off a coup. (Story below)

The three men, who file Arroyo directed on Wednesday to assess the situation and make a recommendation within 24 to 72 hours, said they relayed this to her in a meeting prior to the news conference.

GMA ADVISED A6

THE PRESIDENT'S MEN. Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz (left), Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao, with Press Secretary Ignacio Bunyo, say they are recommending to Ms Arroyo the lifting of Proclamation No. 1017.

I ON FILE A2

PNP chief: 6 Magdalo officers ready to tell all

By Luige A. del Puerta and Philip C. Tubeza

THREE JUNIOR OFFICERS OF an elite combat unit of the Philippine National Police implicated in the alleged fresh attempt to unseat Ms Arroyo have denied a hand in the plot, but six former Magdalo officers, who allegedly participated in planning a coup, are willing to tell all, the police said.

"So right now, we continue to gather evidence that would prove or disprove their denial," Director Marinelo Ilo, chief of the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM), said, referring to Senior Insp. Benjamin Magalong, Chief Inspector Eric Diliag and Inspector Ryan Palcong.

The three officers of the Special Action Force (SAF) are under "restrictive custody" in Camp Crame, the PNP headquarters, following reports that they had tried to recruit colleagues to join protesters last week during a "March for Peace," when they would declare their withdrawal of support from the government, according to PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao.

Their commander, Chief Supt. Marcelino Franco, was earlier sacked for his "failure to command his men." He is now under house arrest.

Also sacked for reportedly

PNP A4

TRANSPARENCY. Yes, the checks were given to the soldiers but formally donated and backed by solicitation letters and receipts, Estrada son-in-law Mouvar Lopez explains during a visit to the office of DILG Secretary Ronaldo Puno. Lopez heads Estrada's Kabuhs sa Kawal Foundation. (See story on Page A3.)

JOHN WOODS

Joker: Palace primary target is the media

By Philip C. Tubeza

SEN. JOKER ARROYO YESTERDAY said police officials, in clear violation of the constitutional guarantee of a free press, attempted to stop ABS-CBN's live television coverage of Sunday's Marina protest but were rebuffed.

Arroyo said a member of the Lopez family, which owns the giant network, told him about the police move. "He said ABS-CBN was asked to stop airing the incident."

A group of Marines protested the relief of Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, the Marine commandant, in Fort Bonifacio but returned to barracks after a tense six-hour standoff when its calls for people power went largely ignored.

Arroyo did not name the Lopez family member but said the police move on Sunday against ABS-CBN was a "clear violation of the freedom of the press."

The administration senator said that the target of President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency on Friday was not Antiquenyo Rep. Crispin Beltran or Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo who, he said, were "being humiliated" in Congress. The two are among six congressmen targeted for arrest on rebellion charges.

"The focus is still on the press. That is what they're still after and they're

JOKER A4

Catholics asked to say prayer in time of war

By Christian V. Esguerra

IN A SIGN THAT THE POLITICAL crisis is worsening, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines is asking the faithful to say a special prayer that is said during wars and disasters.

"Oratio imperata [literally 'obligatory prayer'] in time of civil disturbance" seeks divine intervention for a peaceful resolution of the political standoff, Fr. Anscar Chupungco, executive secretary of the CBCP Commission on Liturgy, said yesterday.

Also yesterday, the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, a key administration ally, appealed to distance itself from Ms Arroyo.

"The President's declaration of a state of national emergency is worrisome as this could mean the suppression of civil liberties and of human rights. We hope that it

CATHOLICS A4

Querubin back with aching heart

By Nikko Dizon

IF THERE IS ANYTHING THAT will make a battle-scarred, hardened soldier weep, it is a wounded heart.

And this was how Marine Col. Ariel Querubin's wife explained his emotional farewell to his troops on Wednesday, when he relinquished his post as commander of the 1st Marine Brigade in Camp Ranao, Marawi City.

"He survived in 1989 and, now, he isn't even wounded—only his heart [is]," Flor Querubin told reporters yesterday while she waited for her husband to arrive at the Manila Domestic Airport in Pasay City.

The colonel arrived at 1:10 p.m. on board Cebu Pacific flight 5J 5384 from Cagayan de Oro.

While speaking with reporters, Flor Querubin received a call apparently from her husband.

"Hi, babe... Yes, yes... I love

QUERUBIN A6

Atienza wing ousts Drilon as LP president

By Tina G. Santos and TJ Burgonio

RALLYING BEHIND RELEAguered President Macapagal-Arroyo, a faction of the splintered Liberal Party yesterday ousted Franklin Drilon as party president at a meeting that was denounced by the Senate President's faction as a rump session engineered by Malacañang.

Ms Arroyo herself showed up at the Manila Hotel meeting and congratulated Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor shortly after they were unanimously voted party president and chair, respectively, by some 200 party members.

But party members identified with Drilon held a four-hour emergency caucus last night at the Club Filipino in San Juan.

They said the convention and election called by the Atienza faction was part of Malacañang's "divide and rule" tactic against the political opposition and a plot to establish a one-party state.

ATIENZA A6

GI sees Giuliani version in S. Leyte gov

By Christian V. Esguerra

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—To a US Marine, the tragedy that hit this small town may have produced for St. Bernard its own version of New York's Rudy Giuliani.

Amid the many fatalities Saturday who emerged after mud and boulders buried Barangay Guinsuguran on Feb. 17, Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias has quickly stood out.

One American soldier saw in Lerias a shadow of Giuliani, the former mayor of New York who tried to keep his city together after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

"I think she's a Filipino version of Mayor Giuliani," US Marine Capt. Darrell Putney told the Inquirer on Feb. 23. "She's a very compassionate lady and she's inspiring her people never to lose hope."

The presence of Lerias in both calming and reassuring in evacuation centers, in landslide areas, or in the narrow streets of St. Bernard where residents struggle to go on with their lives.

Inside a tent overlooking the site of the landslide, Lerias took calls from provincial workers and volunteers, fellow governors and leaders pledging assistance, and

GI SEES A7

THE DYNAMIC, indefatigable Governor Lerias among the many inspired her people never to lose hope. And her words were spoken like an expert with a heart. She toured PGMA Arroyo (right) thru the devastated

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2006

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Easter sunny. Cloudy and showers will sometimes mostly cloudy and with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Second **FRONTPAGE**

Erap foundation faces probe

By Sid C. Cabuenyagan Jr., Dona Z. Pazolingan and Norman Bordadora

THE GOVERNMENT SAID YESTERDAY IT WAS gathering more evidence against former President Joseph Estrada and other financiers of last week's alleged coup attempt against President Macapagal-Arroyo as two elite military units implicated in the plot admitted receiving a total of P7 million from the deposed leader.

But while officials of the Philippine Army's First Scout Ranger Regiment and the Philippine Marines Corps Special Forces (MCSF) both admitted and obtained funds from Estrada, they maintained that the money had gone to their cooperatives as capital and not to any coup plot or other destabilization campaign against the government.

The First Scout Ranger Regiment whose commander, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, was arrested last Thursday, admitted and accepted the P4-million from Estrada's lawyer Edwin Post Jose who is Subalo or Estrad Filipino Foundation Inc. Dec. 24. The money remains intact in the bank account of the regiment's Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

"It was given in good faith, for not an additional capital," said Capt. Clifford Cordova, the cooperative's manager. "Our conscience is clear. This is not for a coup plot."

The Marine Corps also admitted and received P3 million from Estrada's foundation but Antonio for their cooperative, according to corps spokesperson Maj. Mariquito Calderon.

"They did not even know the foundation was Estrada's. They knew it was Subalo coz in-law Mamerto Bruno Lopez's," Jr. Calderon said. "The money is not for destabilization. It's for loans."

Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and Lt. Col. Alan Quan also were relieved last Saturday as Marine Corps commandant and brigade commander, respectively. Quan also admitted he planned to join the anti-Arroyo rallies last Friday but Miranda dismissed him and let go.

Armed Forces spokesperson Lt. Tristan Kison said there was nothing wrong with military cooperatives and citing those private individuals as long as the donations were through legal channels.

But like the military's statements, the Estrada's pronouncements that the donations were made in good faith to provide Christmas cheer moved Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

"I have my serious reservations on that," Gonzalez said in a news conference in Malacañang. "The statement of Mr. Estrada is a statement against his interest under the rules of evidence. He gave money and now he is claiming that it is for Christmas, that it isn't his defense."

Gonzalez said Estrada was sowing those "refined efforts to destabilize the administration. "Sowing the people who are easy to use in street marches and demonstrations are his children," he said.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said the authorities were gathering evidence against several personalities linked to Estrada and they believe financed the failed military uprising last Friday.

Gonzalez said he was looking further into a report that a group of businessmen were present at the house of former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco's brother on the eve of the failed coup. The Tarlac magnates report said details of the plot discussed at the meeting, but Cojuangco has denied the allegations.

Meanwhile, Marshall "Boyet" Lopez, Estrada's son-in-law who managed the foundation, said the donations were solicited as early as November last year.

"It was December. I never had an inkling of any groundings in the military until a few weeks ago when I started receiving intercepts about them," Lopez said at a news conference following a meeting with former lawyers Rosario Bunag.

The funds solicited for the families of the Magalits were meant to give them cheer over the holidays, Soy Estrad that for two years (should) there per) was cut and they have been shortcut," Lopez said, adding the Magalits like received P3 million through a law office.

Pajes, who had spoken on his with Estrada about the donations, said he would refer the Philippine National Police to investigate the activities of the Subalo or Estrad Filipino Foundation. With reports from Roland F. Pleven and Jaclyn del Puerto

SOUVENIR HUNTER
An American Marine looks at some souvenir arrows being sold by Aetas during a fair in the Subic area joint war exercises between US and Philippine troops in Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City.

Magsaysay goes on medical leave

By TJ Burgonio

A "TUNE-UP AND RE-BOOST."

That, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said yesterday, is what he needs after chairing an unending hearings on the P728-million fertilizer fund scam allegedly involving President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Magsaysay, chair of the committee on agriculture, has asked Senate President Franklin Drilon to grant him a five-week leave to undergo a "comprehensive" medical checkup and a de-stressing program in the United States.

"The past six months beginning September of last year have been demanding and grueling on account of my committee's inquiry into the P728-million fertilizer fund," the senator said in a 9th 23 letter to Drilon.

The committee wrapped up its inquiry this week and released its report on Wednesday.

But in a briefing yesterday, the 67-year-old Magsaysay admitted he was going to Stanford University Medical Center in California on the recommendation of his doctors.

"Just like a car, I'm in need of some major tune-up. I want to see annual [chest-kasi] last November and I've gone to hospitals here—St. Luke's and NKTI. (National Kidney and Transplant Institute) —and my doctors there prepared that I go to Stanford for further diagnosis," he said.

The senator, however, declined to reveal the diagnosis that prompted his doctors to recommend that he go to the US.

"It's not life-threatening, but it has to be addressed ASAP so it can be prevented. In short, that is just preventive maintenance. It's the kind of checking-i-ce undergoes after repairing mileage of 50,000 kilometers," he said.

When pressed, Magsaysay said with a laugh: "Say mon down till— first 67—the system is not as strong. You're right, the pipelines has to be cleaned up. At 67, you usually get rough along the pipeline."

Piecemeal release of fertilizer scam Senate report hit

By Christine A. Gaglicot

THE RELEASE BY THE SENATE committee on fiscal watch against rule of the report on the P728-million fertilizer fund scam on a "piecemeal basis" is a deliberate and calibrated attempt to derail the investigation.

Agriculture Undersecretary Belinda Kimuda and Assistant Secretary Jose Feliz Montes made the allegation in a joint statement yesterday.

The report recommended that the two, among other top executives of the Department of Agriculture (DA) officials, be charged in the case where funds for the purchase of fertilizer and other farm inputs for farmers throughout the country were allegedly diverted to President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign in the 2004 election.

Gonzales and Montes said they "found it ominous that the Senate committee elected to release its findings in a piecemeal basis."

"How does one explain the fact that the panel submitted its recommendations to the Ombudsman two weeks ago (a set of recommendations that we thought was final, the release of which was accompanied by media statements) and only now starts to issue it several batches?" they said in the statement.

"As things stand, we can't help but hatch suspicions that the piecemeal release of certain recommendations could be part of a bigger picture and that they are deliberate calibrated moves to destabilize the government," they said.

"At this the Senate investigation, we are being held not in aid of legislation but in aid of prosecution. And, should there be unanimity of recommendations to be forwarded to the Ombudsman, we're afraid the inquiry was just part of a larger plan to persecute in aid of Ombudsman," they said.

Gonzales and Montes said they hoped "this latest recommendation would be the last. It was the Senate committee and there would be no more part three or the ended episode."

"Otherwise when would the end?" they said.

Ombudsman pressed to act on Senate report

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE WILL PRESS OMbudsman Merceditas Gutierrez to act swiftly on a committee recommendation to prosecute top local and former agriculture officials, and if possible, reinstate President Macapagal-Arroyo's culpability in the alleged P728-million fertilizer fund scam.

The new hearings in pursuing the Ombudsman to get on the job, not to dilly-dally. We want to see to it that justice will be done," said Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the committee on agriculture.

Magsaysay's committee and the blue ribbon committee came out the other day with their joint report on the results of their investigation into the smooth which they called a "tremendous, systematic and agro-abused fund" (sic). The panels submitted the report a few hours after it was released.

Magsaysay said the people would expect Gutierrez to conduct her own investigation of the fertilizer fund if resolution within 60 days.

"Gutierrez has a high responsibility here. I will say that how the Ombudsman may actually implement is one of finding from agriculture funds and make no bones for anyone in the Ombudsman," he said. "If it's not and it's proclaiming,

Japanese firms dun Piatco for billions for Naia 3 work

By Tarra S. Quismundo

TWO JAPANESE FIRMS ARE demanding the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) billions of pesos which they say represents long overdue payments due them as ordered by a London Court.

Seeking relief from a local court, Takenaka Corp. and Asahikosan Corp. yesterday sought about P4.4 billion from Piatco, the builder of the controversial Nayoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

In a complaint filed before the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC), the two firms said they filed the civil suit "to enforce foreign judgments or final orders that, in the case of Asahikosan, arose from related transactions commissioned abroad."

The firms claimed that Piatco, a consortium that includes German airport operator Fraport AG, "engaged the services of the plaintiffs Takenaka and Asahikosan as the main contractors to build" the Naia 3 Terminal 3.

A Piatco court had ruled that the government could take over the terminal upon a P3-billion payment to Piatco.

The Japanese companies paid a filing fee for the civil action amounting to P77.8 million. The firms issued several checks to complete the amount, according to court staff.

They asked the court to order Piatco to pay claims they had won through separate rulings of the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, Technology and Construction court in London, England.

They said that Piatco "failed and/or refused to pay" $81.38 million (roughly P4.38 billion), an interest of P116.025 million, and $65,000 (around P3.5 million), as the London Court had ordered in its Final Judgment, dated Feb. 10, 2005, and Executed Judgment, dated Dec. 2, 2005.

The London Court action had been between "final and enforceable" the firms said, as Piatco did not challenge both enforceable judgments.

The firms disclosed that in an effort to seek payment, they had sent a letter to Piatco last Feb. 20 demanding their unsettled dues. They said the appeal had been unheeded until today.

In addition, Takenaka and Asahikosan asked the court to have Piatco pay for attorney's fees and litigation costs, totaling some P82 million.

"Due to Piatco's unjust refusal to settle [our] just and demandable claims, [we] were constrained to engage services... of counsel for an agreed fee, plus a reasonable premium in case of a successful outcome. In addition, [we] will incur litigation costs of no less than P82-million. Thus, Piatco should be ordered to answer the above amounts as attorney's fees and expenses of litigation," said the complaint.

'Why are you crying, Mama?'

By DJ Yap

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD KRISHNO ARIMBONG is no more younger than the eight years his father has spent in jail, or he is used to not seeing him for months at a time.

When his father, one of the "Manduriao Six," was sent to death row the other day he wondered what the uproar was all about.

"Why are you crying?" he asked his mother Rosie Marimao, 40, as she cried glad to find the wonders of the law.

Eduardo Jr. does not yet understand that his father will now be spending the rest of his life waiting for execution, even as appeals on the case make their way through the court system.

After an eight-year legal battle, Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Ma. Theresa Dolores de Perio found the seven guilty of the murder of his father-congressman Jose Villarosa and the Manduriao Six for conspiring to murder Michael and Joel Quintos, the sons of Villarosa's political rival Ricardo Quintos, in Cotabato City on Dec. 29, 1997.

The killer's testimony convicted the Manduriao Six, the label that the media have attached to the six farmers, alleged members of the extremist New People's Army who were sentenced for the murders.

Relatives of the six—Hermano, Jesus Virgilio, Marcelito Mimbela, Mario Velita, Ruben Salagayan and Carlito Timotea—declared what they said was a grave injustice.

The Task Force Detainees of the Philippines also condemned the conviction, saying it was a "travesty of justice and [showed the] failure of the justice system."

Oil firms cut LPG prices

By Abigail L. Ho

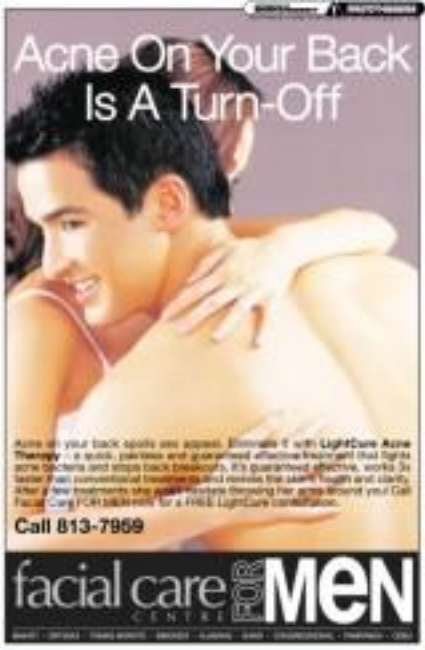
AFTER IMPLEMENTING successive price hikes, oil firms yesterday slashed prices of their liquefied petroleum gas by between P1 and P1.50 per kilogram.

Petron Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc. and Total Philippines Corp. reduced their prices by P1 a kilogram at 12:01 a.m. starting today.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. cut prices by P1.50 a kilogram.

The oil firms attributed the huge drop to the international contract price of LPG as the reason for the price adjustment.

With this price adjustment, 11-kilogram LPG cylinders now sell for between P487.68 and P505.66.



'CONSTITUTIONAL BODY'

Ombudsman exempt from contempt–Gutierrez

By Armand N. Nocum

MAKING POSSIBLE CONTEMPT charges, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez yesterday defended the prerogatives of her office, insisting efforts by the Supreme Court to make her explain why she has failed to determine the criminal liability of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and other officials in the allegedly irregular award of the P1.3 billion poll computerization contract to the Megalotlic consortium.

In her comment, Gutierrez said the Ombudsman's Office cannot be held in contempt because it is a constitutional body.

Moreover, the high court's order for it to determine the criminal liability of the respondents in the contract that the SC had earlier voided was not a "mandatory directive" but a "tolerant" and Gutierrez in the comment that Ernesto C. Pagsanjan, the acting director of the Ombudsman's Office of Legal Affairs, filed on her.

She said "the Ombudsman has no duty to render reports on the name, eventual outcome and completion of its investigations on the Comelec-Mega Build consortium controversy."

"In a such judicial recognition of the Ombudsman's independence, the decision dated Jan. 13, 2005 in fact contained no directive for the Ombudsman to render such reports," Gutierrez said.

Null and void

In 2004, the high court ruled that the bidding irregularities in the automation contract had rendered null and void the P1.3-billion contract awarded to the Megalotlic consortium to supply the Comelec with 1,991 automated counting machines.

It also ordered the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability of those involved in the alleged irregularities.

Following a motion from the complainant Information Technology Foundation of the Phil. (ITFP) to issue an order directing the Ombudsman to give up update on its investigation of the issue, the SC last Jan. 24 asked the Ombudsman to "show cause why it should not be held in contempt of court" for its failure to comply fully with the court's directive in the Jan. 13, 2004 decision in the case.

The petitioner, ITFP, also informed the court that a complaint had been filed by the Ombudsman's Field Investigation Office sometime in October 2004, but not by the Office of the Ombudsman that just issued an it.

In her comment, Gutierrez said the SC order could be considered as a referral not a mandatory directive as "specifically one for the Ombudsman to determine any criminal liability of those involved in the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the bidding and award of the contract."

She said the Ombudsman's Office "has been conducting its own investigation of the matter and has in fact issued subpoenas to the officials and employees of the Comelec and other persons involved in the questioned transactions, nothing more, nothing less."

"Its undertaking must not be unnecessarily expanded nay beyond its literal and connotational significations ... To hold the Ombudsman in contempt of court for its purported failure to act upon the said order/s, or to comply with the said directive, is to stretch far a clear distorting of the literate and willful disregard or disobedience by the Ombudsman," she said.

In any case, Gutierrez said her predecessor Simeon V. Marcelo did take action on the complaint. Marcelo issued an order on Jan. 14, 2004 directing the then fact-finding and intelligence research bureau (FIRES), now known as the Field Investigation Office (FIO), to conduct an investigation into Comelec's alleged irregular award of the contract to Megalotlic.

Palace defends GMA legitimacy before military

MALACAÑANG SAID IT IS NECESSARY TO defend the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo's rule before the military in the wake of the statements drawn by some Marines on Sunday.

Mr. Arroyo's election was the main topic at a forum held Wednesday at Camp Aguinaldo where about 200 junior officers and enlisted personnel were reminded of their oath of loyalty to the chain of command.

Cabinet secretary Eduardo Ermita defended Mr. Arroyo's victory in the May 2004 election, painstakingly explaining official results, survey results, exit polls and electronic analysis.

Several soldiers left the room for a "rigaudon break" during Ermita's presentation but were ordered to return by their officers.

Reporters later got hold of copies of Ermita's presentation titled "Moving Forward: Reflections on National Issues" that posed, among others, the questions: "Who runs the elections?"

(Nona Z. Mendoza)

Paterno claim not true, says ConCom colleague

FORMER TESDA SECRETARY SIGNETH Paterno drew a rebuke from a colleague in the Consultative Commission on constitutional amendments as lawyer Raul Lambino clarified that the ConCom-proposed transitory provisions did not expand but actually diminished the powers of President Arroyo.

Lambino said yesterday Noynoy had fabricated facts in claiming that the ConCom had sought to clothe President Arroyo with Marcos-type powers when the touch is the Chief Executive would actually be turning over certain powers to the interim prime minister who will in fact be elected by the Parliament.

Lambino, now a member of the Charter Change Advocacy Commission (CDAC), said Paterno had "misinformed and disinformed the people" when he spoke about his objections to the ConCom draft and the transitory provisions being discussed in the House of Representatives concerning constitutional reforms.

Lambino aired his views in yesterday's launching of Brawn, Opinion, Study (BOS), a weekly breakfast news forum at Manila Restaurant in Quezon City.

"I cannot fathom how Paterno could possibly such lies," said Lambino, a professor of constitutional law at the University of the East. "Contrary to his false claims, the transitory provisions would not expand the powers of the President, but would actually diminish it because she would have to give way to the interim prime minister under the transitory provisions."

Lambino added: "His claim that the recommendations of the ConCom would lead to a Marcos-type parliament where President Arroyo will both be President and Prime Minister is not true."

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2005 Model AquaSoft Franchisees

Top 20 Performing Franchisees

GMA warns smugglers: Don't drop Mike A's name

PEOPLE ENCOUNTER FIRST GUTTLEMAN

Jose Miguel Arroyo's name is capable muscle in the Bureau of Customs can expect only one kind of treatment.

This was the stern warning of President Macapagal-Arroyo as she praised her customs and improvement in collections of the Bureau of Customs, which went up in the first two months of the year.

"If there is anyone there who will use my husband's name, the more you should catch him," the President told Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales during a televised roundtable conference with reporters. "I said the practice of dropping Mike Arroyo's name had been going on "since the time of Finance Secretary Jose Camacho."

Mr Arroyo's husband has been linked by critics to the smuggling of vehicles, grains and other agriculture commodities, particularly since the President took power in 2001 and this no-can has been cited as a major cause of the low customs collections.

Mr Arroyo noted that the First Gentleman had already removed a little angling customs collectors not to entertain individuals using his name to speed up the release of their goods. Apparently, this has not been heeded. Since the President said she was removing her earlier instructions about cracking down on name droppers to unearth the mechanism of strong customs collections during the first two months of the year.

Morales reported that Customs generated P124.488 billion in revenues in February, P206 million better than the target of P12.282 billion and P1.071 billion or 10 percent higher than the P11.417 billion collected during the same month last year. (Continued story on Page B2)

The Bureau also surpassed its January target by P9.8 million, collecting P12.296 billion compared to the target of P12.005 billion.

The ports of Batangas and Manila were tagged as the best performers as they surpassed their combined targets by P1.1 billion for the first two months of the year.

"When I appointed Morales, a lot of people questioned my choice and asked, 'Who is his political godfather?' I told them he has no political backer. I chose him because I remember from our last scheduled conference, when our collections were falling, that he had a sterling record as Customs chief of the Batangas port," the President said. MYC Cabucungan Jr.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, March 3, 2006
Friday, After Ash Wednesday
1st Reading: Is 58:1-9
Gospel: Matthew 9:14-15

The disciples of John came to Jesus with the question, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast so many occasions, but not your disciples?"

Jesus answered them, "How can you expect wedding guests to mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? Time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and they will fast."

Commentary

We are told to fast in our schedules and rituals our day. We are a nation that outwardly feels and prays but we continue with our vast pursuits of lust, greed, fixation at sea of, trading laborers unjustly, striking with wicked deeds. God cares not for outward show and wonders. Jesus tells us those from whom of those we have been enslaved, freedom for the oppressed, and that we share our bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and homeless, and do unspeak unethical tasks. We are to do so that all of us may be truly united brothers among us, what we would wish to do to the bridegroom Christ. That we will know the heart of God sent to send the Lord will hear us, the first we must humble ourselves, and live exclusively unless from our midst. It's time to live not selves in a better and to unbelievers.

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Senior US diplomat sees GMA, also meets FVR, Cory

From page A1

and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill said at a pre-departure press conference that he met separately with Mr. Arroyo and former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino.

Hill's three-day visit to the Philippines followed Mr. Arroyo's proclamation of a state of national emergency on Friday last week and a "display of force" by Marines on Sunday.

He met with Mr. Arroyo at around 3 p.m. Sunday and discussed regional issues, the joint RP-U.S. military exercises, as well as the "perspective of the Palace" on the state of play here."

US Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop said Hill met with Aquino on Tuesday morning and with Ramos later in the afternoon.

"Clearly the current political situation is the issue on the part of Malacañang," said Bobbie Boy Trevino Acosta, citing the decision of four Cabinet officials during the conversation.

The 60-year-old party belonged to Mr. Arroyo's coalition but split into two factions in the run-up to the May 2004 elections.

Trevino gripped the gathering as former Education Undersecretary Chito Gascon, who was introduced by Atienza as "the spokesman and representative of Senate President Franklin Drilon," questioned the legality of the assembly, saying the election was not on the agenda and called officials of the party-were not present.

"What provision of the party constitution states that the party may hold a national assembly without an agenda?" Gascon asked. "The party should take a decision that would not create a lasting bridge between its executives and high-ranking officials."

Outnumbered

But one suspension stood up and proceeded with a roll call vote, before even announcing that there was a quorum.

Obviously outnumbered, Gascon walked out of the Centennial Hall of the hotel amid boos. Among those present were 130 municipal mayors, 12 members of the party's National Executive Council (Nec), 36 congressmen, four governors, five vice governors, five city mayors and 4 vice mayors.

Atienza said the election of a new set of LP officers was prompted by questions from members regarding the party's official stand on major issues, principally on the administration "that are for or against President Arroyo."

This led to the signing of a resolution by LP officials and members throwing their full support behind the administration of Mr. Arroyo.

All positions vacant

Afterward, Gov. Sally Lobregat-Reyes of Antique moved for the declaration of all the party positions vacant, immediately following the election.

Drilon immediately assailed the proceedings.

"It is a coup nonetheless, a big farce and an apparent effort by Malacañang to clean up political support for a beleaguered President Arroyo," Drilon said in a statement.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan echoed Drilon's view, saying "I do not recognize the legality of the election of new party officers. This is a very painful development for the party."

The LP, Pangilinan noted, was considered to be "on the other side of the fence."

"When anyone removes a constitutional right, it's time to stand up. It's time to stand for the people in the face of this grave danger," he said in a statement. He cited examples as a matter of information and opinions. It's quite a normal thing to meet with retired politicians [in any country]," the US official added.

Ramos, for his part, told reporters Thursday that you can spend an hour talking to, you want to know the perspectives of a former president. He talked about US-Philippine relations, regional issues, and we talked about the ongoing political situation. "I felt said acknowledged if the two leaders had raised specific concerns during their talks.

Hill arrived in Manila on Monday mainly to attend a meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Regional Forum on confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy.

Atienza wing ousts Drilon as LP president; 'GMA destroying 60-yr-old party'

From page A1

"The effect is that there's really a divide and rule tactic on the part of Malacañang," said Bobbie Boy Trevino Acosta, citing the election of four Cabinet officials during the convention.

The 60-year-old party belonged to Mr. Arroyo's coalition but split into two factions in the run-up to the May 2004 elections.

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"It is most unfortunate that some party leaders decided to act as agents of Malacañang in its relentless effort to survive the ongoing political crisis," he added in a text.

Drilon maintained that he remained the party president as he was elected to a six-year term in the constituent the minority.

"There were 103 members who elected me property in the National Executive Council a year-and-a-half ago. And only 32 now called for an interim election. There is the minority," he said on ANC.

Going to Supreme Court

He group, he said, would question that before the Commission on Elections and the Supreme Court.

Gabriel Claudio, presidential adviser on political affairs, denied Malacañang had a hand in Drilon's ouster. "It's a purely internal matter among LP members," he said.

Drilon also appealed to Mr. Arroyo "to stop the atrocious violations of established political institutions in the country in the name of her political survival."

The Senate President said the convention was illegal because Atienza, as party chair, had no authority to call a national assembly. He said the 'force members were declared into believing they were attending a convention on Proclamation No. 1017, and that only 32 of the 103 member were attended. With a report from Cliff C. Calbo in page A.

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Querubin back . . .

From page A1

you, Dad..." she said.

Minutes later, Querubin emerged from the airport, dressed in a white shirt and dress, his eyes behind dark sunglasses.

Escorted by two Marines and airport security personnel, he walked straight to his wife, ignoring the reporters waiting for a word with him.

The couple quickly boarded a white van to go to their quarters in Camp Aguinaldo.

Flor had invited relatives and friends over for a get-together, "to give him support."

'Thank you'

In front of the Querubins' quarters was hung a caveman bearing the message: "Daddy Artel. Thank you for your great example. We are proud of you."

Inside, Flor entertained about two dozen guests and reporters. Her husband stayed in the garden.

By law, he is ordered not to speak to the media, she said.

But Marine spokesperson Maj. Melquiades Orduña said there was no "gag order" on Querubin, who is a recipient of the military's highest award for bravery in combat, the Medal of Valor.

Orduña said the colonel "could have chosen not to speak or not to prejudice the investigation."

On Tuesday, Querubin instigated a six-hour standoff at the Marine Corps headquarters in Fort Bonifacio to protest the sudden relief of their commandant, Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda.

Querubin's colonel that he had planned to lead a large Marine contingent in the protest rally in Edsa on Feb. 24 but that Miranda had persuaded nine him to desist.

He also denied Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, who was also seconded to the defense department, was under pressure from President Macapagal-Arroyo, was also relieved as commander of the 1st Scout Ranger Regiment and ordered restricted to quarters in her Bonifacio.

Career vs priority

Earlier at the airport, Flor said of her husband: "I know his priority is his career. I've already compromised myself to be married to his profession. But I know that what he has done is all for us."

According to Flor, her husband to "have his career" that he will not find fulfillment other than being a soldier even if it will be more financially "gratifying" outside the military.

She said her husband had actually offered to resign but that the offer was turned down.

Despite what has happened, she said, "his career is not yet over."

Orduña said Querubin would be under the custody of Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, the newly appointed Marine commandant.

"He is not restricted in quarters. He has no case so he will undergo investigation," said Orduña.

Given up for dead

Querubin was so badly wounded in the failed 1989 coup attempt against then President Corazon Aquino that he was given up for dead.

His body was already in a pile of cadavers, but a doctor saw his finger twitch and he was moved back to health.

He later escaped from the hospital and was eventually granted amnesty in 1995.

Querubin was awarded the Medal of Valor for showing exemplary courage in fighting Moro rebels in 1999 in Lanao del Sur.

And now he has been stripped of his command of the 1st Marine Brigade.

Flor said she says "every time I see that seven footage 1st the emotional goodbye between the colonel and his family."

"I says it is at least four times," she said. "It's doesn't usually cry."

With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan

GI sees Giuliani version in S. Leyte gov

Front page A1

ordinary people offering sympathy to the peripheral Guinsaugons.

She was constantly on the move, giving instructions on how the overall search and rescue must proceed while consoling those who were getting disheartened.

[The search for survivors officially ended on the night of Feb. 24. Authorities decided to focus on retrieving bodies – Ed.]

Commemorative ceremony

The search for bodies sustained by the landslide officially ended yesterday, with a commemorative ceremony planned to provide closure to the tragedy, officials said.

Lotilla said the 200-hectare wasteland that was Guinsaugon would be turned into a cemetery where a modest monument would be erected for the dead.

"The Philippine Army will end the search today but will not leave the area," she said.

A total of 140 bodies had been retrieved, with the last one found Tuesday, and 972 people were still missing and buried dead, she said.

Today, a Mass will be held at the edge of the dig, and posthumous awards will be given to government workers who died in the line of duty and to those who survived, she said.

A helicopter will fly a priest over the area to sprinkle holy water to bless it.

Representatives of the Indonesian and UN governments – which will have formative but contingents in the province – will give statements, along with Philippine officials.

"[Today] we will have our commemorative ceremony, then it will be turned into a sanctuary," Javier said. "We will have to green the area so we can control the soil."

Cross

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino said soldiers put up a concrete cross as a temporary shrine for Friday's ceremony until a permanent one is built.

The soldiers are also distributing relief goods to victims, constructing evacuation centers and securing the disaster area.

US Marines, who have been helping in the search efforts, on Sunday withdrew most of their forces, which peaked at about 600. But a small contingent stayed behind for humanitarian work, Ramos said earlier.

Other international groups also had left earlier, including search teams from Taiwan, Malaysia, Turkey and Spain. A contingent from Indonesia, which will provide mainly medical assistance to evacuees, will remain for a month.

Even night during the search and rescue operation, Lotilla gathered all those involved in the effort to assess what they had accomplished for the day. She would then appear at a press briefing, not hesitating to answer every media query down to the last detail.

Inspiration

The sight of the Ilam governor was enough to inspire the multinational rescue effort to proceed despite the overwhelming prospect that none of some 1,000 residents buried under the rubble would still be found alive.

"She's keeping hope alive," Ramos said. "A lot of survivors owe their rescue to her persistence. A lot of people are asking if it's time to stop the search. I praise her for keeping strong. This is her province. She's the overall leader."

Others nearest cleveland that rescuers were giving up, Javier made it clear she was not giving up hope.

Life too precious

"Life is too precious," she told the rescuers. "If you have someone's hope under the rubble, wouldn't you take the chance?"

Pioneer recalled the day after the tragedy when he and other US Marines debarked from their ship and saw the magnitude of the job ahead.

"Many of us were astonished, especially upon hearing reports that the people were buried about 30 meters deep in the mud," he said. "It seemed there was just no way for anybody to survive."

But after the Americans were briefed by the governor on what had to be done, their pessimism vanished.

No stranger to disaster

Lotilla, who's now serving her third and last term, is no stranger to tragedy in her province.

In December 2003, there was landslide in Southern Leyte, killing more than 100 people. That, too, turned the governor from a politician to a hands-on leader and rescuer.

But nothing could prepare a weekend politician for the tragedy of Feb. 17 when a huge chunk of the mountain collapsed and crushed the entire Barangay Guinsaugon below it.

Lotilla said she had been putting up a brave front for her people. "I'm not allowed to cry. I need to be strong for them."

A devout Catholic, she said she had been drawing strength from the thought that the tragedy was God's will and that "He will give you the means with which to cope with the challenge if only you believe."

Deluge of assistance

So far, there's been a deluge of assistance from all directions. Indeed, the heroism have not abandoned her people.

Lotilla graduated from the University of the Philippines with a master's degree in speech and drama in 1975.

Born Nilda Ilanda, Imeldren Leyte on June 18, 1945, Lotilla is the chair of the Philippine National Red Cross. Bombers Leyte chapter, and a member of the PMRC board of governors.

She is a military reservist with the rank of captain and commander of the 215th Engineering Battalion.

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GMA advised to lift 1017

Turn to page A2

But they also said that even with the lifting of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 declaring a state of national emergency, the authorities would continue to arrest those implicated in the supposedplot.

The other night, the PNP downgraded its alert status to heightened alert following reports that the nationwide security situation was normalizing.

"Lifting doesn't alter status that only 75 percent of the 118,000-strong police force is on duty.

"We have laid improving its structure, in terms of everything, including the future. I'm the Acting Secretary for the PNP spokesperson, said in a text message to reporters.

But Pagdilao said Gonzales had "frustrated the regional directors to continue their vigilance and exercise maximum restraint and key command posture."

"Regional directors may upgrade their alert level in their respective areas of responsibility [depending] on the prevailing situation," he said.

24 more hours

Pagdilao also said police would continue to monitor those identified as part of the supposed coup plot.

"Unless something happens, the directive is to recommend the lifting [of PP 1017]," Cruz said at the news conference.

He said the situation had "significantly improved" but that the authorities needed 24 more hours to see if the unrest would continue.

Quoting Gen. Generoso Senga, Armed Forces chief of staff, Cruz said the AFP was in control of the Marines and the Scout Rangers, a number of whom were alleged to have conspired with certain groups to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

Lomibao said the PNP's Special Action Force, which was also alleged to be part of the supposed plot, was "now under our control."

"[For the three days] there's a marked improvement in law and order," there has been no high profile incidents for the past seven days in ... If this trend continues, we will be recommending the lifting of [PP 1017]," he said.

Gonzales reported that many of the supposed plotters had been arrested and were now under maximum restraint.

He said that while he and his colleagues were inclined to recommend the lifting of PP 1017, it was Ms Arroyo who would make the "judgment call" on the matter.

"My impression is that the President knows a lot of the situation on the ground, which I think she is also trying to ascertain based on what we are reporting to her," Gonzales said.

No more trouble

Cruz said the defense department did not expect any more trouble to arise.

Asked about reports that the alleged coup plot was ongoing, he said the military would remain at vigilant as when it thwarted the supposed coup in 2003.

Cruz reiterated the government's call for everyone to "emulate the AFP-boss soldiers, respect the Constitution and stop interfering in the military and the Marines."

"Leave them alone to do their jobs," he said.

As he reports that Senga continued to be courted by various groups bent on supporting the administration, Cruz vouched for the latter's integrity.

"There are no [groups] trying to capitalize on Senga because they know he is a professional soldier who is solidly behind the Constitution, the Commander-in-Chief and the duly constituted authority," Cruz said.

He also expressed confidence that the Supreme Court would validate PP 1017, just as it upheld Mr Arroyo when she declared a state of rebellion in 2001 and 2003—when ex-President Joseph Estrada's supporters took part in the bloody May Day siege of Malacañang, and when a group of young officers and soldiers mounted the Oakwood mutiny in Makati City, respectively.

Enough powers

Gonzales said that even with the lifting of emergency rule, there were "enough powers in the Revised Penal Code and the Constitution" to thwart plots against the administration.

He also said organizers of protest rallies should know that they should get permits or they would be violating the Public Assembly Act.

Lomibao said that once PP 1017 was lifted, the police would substitute its troops from the 41 foot of The Daily Tribune.

Asked what would be going back a similar measure, Lomibao said: "If the danger is real and imminent, and there remains to be a conspiracy, a concerned one to bring down this government, the President, within her powers, can again declare a state of national emergency."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye gave the assurance that Mr Arroyo would make her decision based on information and assessments given to her.

"All may rest assured that the President will act in the best interest of the people," Bunye said in a statement.

At the House, administration allies led by Speaker Jose de Venecia urged the President to immediately lift PP 1017, saying that there is already support to the end a coup attempt against her government.

Citing the "consensus" reached by members of the ruling Lakas-CMD and the majority coalition, De Venecia said there was no longer threat to the republic although "vigilance must continue."

"We are recommending that the lifting of the emergency proclamation be done by next week. If it can be done this week, cool, as much the better," he said.

Don't pressure GMA

Earlier, the House minority called for the lifting of PP 1017 on the basis of its constitutional and legal ramifications as civil liberties, press freedom and due process.

In a joint statement, House Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Prospero Pichay and Reps. Teodoro Casiño, Satur Ocampo and Rafael Mariano called on all sectors to "cease and desist from pressuring the Palace on [PP] 1017 pending its assessment of reports from the defense, police and justice officials that the country's situation is under control."

"We believe that the wisdom of the President in deciding on when a right and how to use country insofar as [PP] 1017 is concerned," said Delapaz Bits.

He added that Mr Arroyo's statement she would lift the declaration if the situation warranted it was "appropriate and amazing." With reports from Gaijo A. del Puerto and Michael Lim Ubac

22 solons question 1017 legality

By Armando N. Nocum

OPPOSITION lawmakers led by House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and the militant Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo filed separate petitions questioning the constitutionality of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, bringing to eleven the number of groups legally contesting it.

Through lawyer Pacifico Agabin, Escudero's group asked the Supreme Court to stop Malacañang from implementing PP 1017, which they said was "another capricious exercise of power" by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Like the other groups before them, the 22 congressmen asked the tribunal to issue a temporary restraining order on PP 1017, as well as all decrees, orders and measures issued by Ms Arroyo or upon her authority.

They said they were in court "in view of the unprecedented public interest ... involved and the extraordinary urgency for the resolve of judicial review."

Joker: Palace primary target is the media

Turn to page A2

taking measured steps to achieve their goal," he added.

"Of all the rights enshrined, the rights of the media are the most inconsistent," Arroyo said.

"For example, if you deprive a person of his freedom of expression, only his right is damaged since he cannot speak freely, but if you deprive the media of (their) freedom, they deprive the whole country of free-flowing information," he said.

"It's not the right of one person that is damaged but that of the entire country. We damage the readership; who rely on independent information," he said.

Arroyo said the Lopez union told him that network executives needed off the police by evacuating out that their it would be before if the standoff were resolved live so-duped rumors that spreading that she stood at the military camp was growing.

Better to show

"They said it would be better to have it live and show what was really happening—that the rumors were not true," Arroyo said.

"And, if they did not show anything, the people would have speculated and they would not have known that the administration was what it stood

PNP chief: 6 Magdalo officers ready to tell all

Front page A1

planning to join the drivel presents on Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of Edsa I, and withdraw support from the Arroyo administration were Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Col. Ariel Querubin.

At a Senate hearing on Wednesday Lumibao said that part of the "factual basis" for the proclamation of a state of national emergency on Feb. 24 were the testimonies of the six officers who reported on their alleged fellow plotters after they learned that the Magdalo rebels were supposedly in cahoots with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

It was the Magdalo group that launched a coup attempt in 2003.

"Another factual basis, your honor, is the statements of retired Navy officers who withdrew their support or who withdrew their participation in the planning or in the execution of the plan to take over this government," Lumibao said during the hearing on the budget of the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Members of PMA Class 1997

Lumibao identified the six officers as Capts. Alfredo Jones Sabeo, Rey Galmores, Dennis Sebastian and Jay Rodgers, and First Lieutenants Mario Bautista and Michael Coutreras—all members of Philippine Military Academy Class 1997.

Lumibao said the officers were "eyewitnesses" to the plot to oust his bosses by rightist and leftist rebels.

The police have charged with rebellion and coup d'etat 35 people, including five Bayan Muna party-list members of the House of Representatives, founders of the Sulaeta (Sa Armed Forces Ekumenical) led by former Sen. Ginggo Ocampo, and Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the CPP.

They are among some 50 people accused of rebellion for allegedly conspiring to overthrow the government.

Mercifying investigated are former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and political strategist Jeanne "Bey" Sagsoc for their supposed involvement in the plot to oust the duopoly.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has "invited" Cojuangco, Philippine Olympic Committee chair, and Sagsoc, Council on Philippine Affairs secretary general, in connection with the probe of a Time magazine article implicating them in the failed coup plot.

Upon the request of the police, the Bureau of Immigration on Wednesday placed on its watchlist 51 people linked to the plot.

UNDER HEAVY GUARD: the Magdalo soldiers arrive at the Makati City Regional Trial Court for a hearing last Tuesday. Which of them are ready to talk?

This week, the police said part of the plan to topple Mrs Arroyo was the takeover of Camp Crame and an international airport by men from the INP-SAF.

"The INP-SAF units were assigned to seize Camp Crame and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NIA), build barricades along EDSA, and have a declaration of a withdrawal of support from the Arroyo government," Lumibao said.

The race the most detailed disclosure of the movements of the alleged threat that faced the administration last week.

The SAF had planned the attack on the PNP headquarters and Nala naive in January...on the 11th and then again, on the 14th and 15th, the PNP chief said. They were aborted after Lumibao himself confronted one of the SAF commanders.

Marines, Scout Rangers

There were supposed to be similar moves by two other elite military units—the Philippine Navy's Marines and the Philippine Army's Scout Rangers, according to Lumibao.

When the plans were aborted, the 3rd Marines and Scout Rangers shifted their focus to joining the protest actions on Feb. 24, at the height of the 20th anniversary of the People Power Revolution, Lumibao said.

"The plan was for the SAF contingent based in Bicutan (in Taguig City) to be diverted to Edsa to civilian buses to roll onboard and under arms although with non-elite doses," he said.

"They would link with the civilian components on Edsa for a) manifestation of withdrawal of support from the GMA government," he said.

And Arroyo doesn't want to take killer mobs 80,000 people or 60,000, as the NPA claims, at Edsa-Shrine in Mandaluyong and at the Bonifacio Shrine in Caloocan City on that day, he said.

"The objective (was to) throw Mrs the place, according to Jones Sabeo of the CPP," Lumibao said. "Those confluences of events and personalities presented a clear and present danger that had to be acted on, and we did just in time."

Communiqué

Besides the statements of the six officers, the other basis for the President's declaration of the state of national emergency last week were the documents seized from Magdalo officer 1st Lt. Lawrence Sala Jr., including a communiqué from Sison dated Jan. 28.

In the communiqué, Sison said that communist rebels "must develop relentlessly the broad united front to isolate and destroy the Arroyo regime," according to Lumibao.

"This can allow the legal forces of the national democratic movement, the conservative opposition justice and the anti-Arroyo sections of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to unite and overthrow the regime," Lumibao quoted the communiqué as saying.

"It would appear that from the group who are out to overthrow the regime, especially the (CCP), they would do all means to bring down (the government)," he told the senators.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said that even if the rebel soldiers marched unarmed at protest rallies, they would still be violating the Constitution and be liable for committing coup d'etat.

"The Armed Forces shall be insulated from partisan politics. No member of the military shall participate in any political activity, direct or indirect, except to vote," Santiago said, quoting the 1987 Constitution's general provisions.

"Plus, it does not need arms to be guilty of the crime under the Penal Code of inciting to rebellion or insurrection. You can incite simply by marching even without arms," she added. With reports from Jaime Laude B. Salaverria and Margarus C. Ortiz

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The WORLD

Lira Lorena B. Gozo

Saddam admits giving orders which led to executions in '80s

BAGHDAD—SADDAM HUSSEIN ADMITTED IN COURT ON Wednesday that he gave orders that led to the execution of Shiite Muslims in the 1980s, but justified the punishment as his right as Iraq's president, saying: "Where is the crime?"

Saddam made the admission, along with another that he ordered Iraqiland to be razed, during his second day in court this week on charges of crimes against humanity.

In hours of proceedings, prosecutors read out documents, showed satellite images and played audio tapes in an attempt to link Saddam to the execution of 148 Shiites from Dujail after an attempt on his life in the village in July 1982.

A US diplomat familiar with the court said Saddam's statements were damning evidence that could lead trial judges to decide there is sufficient evidence to issue a guilty verdict.

"I exhorted them to the revolutionary court according to the law. Award was implementing the law, he had a right to convict and acquit," Saddam said, referring to his co-accused Awad al-Bandar, the former chief of the Revolutionary Court.

"I stand there ... we specified the farmland of those who were convicted and I signed," said Saddam, who faces hanging if convicted.

"It's the right of the state to confiscate or to expropriate. So where is the crime?"

Describing how gunmen fired machine guns at his motorcade three through the town during a visit, Saddam said: "I saw the bullets with my own eyes."

The trial, which began last October, was adjourned until March 12, the latest in a series of adjournments in the stilted process that some international observers have criticized.

Saddam was embarrassingly rebuked in court as chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Mousawi presented what he said were documents containing Saddam's handwriting, showed aerial pictures of fields laid waste around Dujail and played an audio tape of Saddam in discussion with a Baath party official.

On Tuesday, Mousawi presented what he said was a fourth document signed by Saddam.

In previous proceedings, the judge based testimony from witnesses recounting how they were tortured by Saddam's aides, but was chosen as direct evidence linking Saddam to the crimes.

Prosecutors hope the Dujail case will prove more than cut than other, more complex cases involving charges of genocide where Saddam's responsibility may be more difficult to prove.

Defense counsel has argued that Saddam, a Sunni who justified his harsh rule by the need for national unity, was Iraq's president at the time and that he acted within the law.

"What we see today was not Saddam admitting guilt, but admitting to the fact that he acted in accordance with his official duties and powers," said Ishtar Ibrahim, a legal expert from Human Rights Watch who has been monitoring the case.

Following a week of sectarian violence that has killed hundreds and pitched Iraq toward civil war, Saddam used an opportunity to address the issue as overall the unity of Iraqis in the war he waged against Iran in the 1980s.

The former leader's trial has been overshadowed by fears that Iraq's sectarian tensions are out of control, but Saddam, who has dominated court proceedings in the past with lengthy tirades against the US-backed tribunal, spoke of unity.

"Saddam Abdel-Aziz in 1988 has the Iraqi people even ... Arab and Kurds and all other religions and sects," he said.

"The people must be united," he said. "All religions, all ethnic groups."

Where chief judge Raouf Abdel-Rahman, a Kurd who has been strict with the eight defendants, politely asked Saddam to finish, Saddam said: "Give me some time. I have been your president for 35 years. I am still the president of Iraq according to the constitution."

Saddam's calls for Iraqi unity come a week after suspected al-Qaida militants bombed a Shiite shrine in Samarra, sparking reprisal killings against minority Sunnis and stalling US-backed efforts to forge a government of national unity that would include Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds.

The trial has been marred by the killing of two defense lawyers, the resignation of the previous judge and criticism by international human rights groups who say violence in Iraq makes a fair trial impossible. (Reuters)

FORMER Iraqi President Saddam Hussein (center) and Taha Yassin Ramadan (sixth during their trial in Baghdad March 1. Saddam and seven others are charged with crimes against humanity in connection with the execution of 148 villagers from Dujail after an assassination attempt on the then-in 1982. AFP

32 killed in Iraq sectarian bloodshed

BAGHDAD—BOMBERS KILLED at least 32 people, including two British soldiers, in Iraq on Thursday as waves gunfired found mosques amid fears of a new outbreak of sectarian violence.

Three bombs went off in quick succession in Shiite areas of Baghdad, killing at least 20 people and wounding 130, a security official and medics said.

Twenty-four of the fatalities died in two attacks.

In one, a suicide bomber wearing a explosives vest blew himself up next to a queue of people waiting to buy kerosene in Al-Sadr, southeast Baghdad, while in the other, a car bomb exploded in the city's southeastern district of Jadida, an interior ministry official said.

Those two attacks wounded 112 people, he said. Its bacon blew and then 23 had died just in the single attack in Al-Amin.

Another six people were killed in a car bomb attack near a market in the central Karada district, he said, adding 19 others were wounded.

In southern Iraq, two British soldiers were killed on Tuesday the defense ministry in London told AFP. A third soldier in the US-led multinational force was wounded in the latest violence Amarah.

Iraqi police said a roadside bomb targeted a British patrol in the outskirts of the southern city.

The coordinated attacks hit Baghdad just one day after the latest in a series of sectarian outbreaks and a vehicle ban in the capital.

Earlier on Tuesday, gunmen planted a bomb at the entrance of the Sunni Al-Hadiya mosque, in the northern Al-Hurriya neighborhood of the capital, to interrupt the eminent but ensued no casualties.

The latest flare-up of violence follows days of sectarian bloodshed triggered by the bombing last Wednesday of a Shiite shrine in the northern town of Samarra. AFP

Video shows Bush, security officials clearly warned before Katrina struck

By Margaret Ebrahim and John Solomon

WASHINGTON—IN DRAMATIC AND SOMEtimes agonizing terms, federal disaster officials warned President George W. Bush and his homeland security chief before Hurricane Katrina struck that the storm could breach levees, put lives at risk in New Orleans' Superdome and overwhelm rescuers, according to confidential video footage.

Bush didn't ask a single question during the final briefing before Katrina struck on Aug. 29, but he assured state-to-be-harmed state officials: "We are fully prepared."

The footage—along with seven days of transcripts of briefings obtained by The Associated Press—show in eyewatering detail that while federal officials anticipated the tragedy that unfolded in New Orleans and elsewhere along the Gulf Coast, they were fatally slow to realize they had not mustered enough resources to deal with the unprecedented disaster.

Linked by secure video, Bush expressed a confidence on Aug. 28 that starkly contrasted with the dire warnings his disaster chief and numerous federal, state and local officials previously issuing the four days before the storm.

A top hurricane expert voiced "grave concerns" about the levees and then-federal Emergency Management Agency chief Michael Brown told the president and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff that he feared there weren't enough disaster workers to help survivors at the Superdome.

"I'm concerned about ... their ability to respond in a catastrophic within a catastrophic," Brown told his bosses the afternoon before Katrina made landfall.

The White House and Homeland Security Department have refused to release the video, in total too much into the video footage.

"I hope people don't draw conclusions from the president getting a single briefing," presidential spokesperson Trent Duffy said, citing a variety of orders and disaster declarations Bush signed before the storm made landfall. "He received multiple briefings from multiple officials, and he was completely engaged at all times."

Homeland Security spokesperson Russ Knocke said his department would not release the full set of videotaped briefings, saying most transcripts—though not the video tapes—from the sessions were provided to congressional investigators and reporters.

"There's nothing new or insightful on those tapes," Knocke said. "We actively participated in the lessons-learned review and we continue to participate in the Senate's review and are working with them on their recommendation."

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, a critic of the administration's Katrina response, had a different take after watching the footage Wednesday afternoon from an AP reporter's camera.

"I have tried to stabilize [nothing is any yet right now," Nagin said. "I was listening to what people were saying...they didn't know so therefore it was an issue of a learning curve. You know, from this tape it looks like everybody was fully aware."

Some of the footage and transcripts from briefings Aug. 27-31 conflicts with the defenses that federal, state and local officials have made in trying to deflect blame and minimize the political fallout from the failed Katrina response.

- Homeland Security officials have said the "flag of war" blinded them early on to the magnitude of the disaster. But the video and transcripts show federal and local officials discussed threats clearly, reviewed long-made plans and understood factors would wreak devastation of historic proportions. "I'm sure it will be the top 10 or 15 when all is said and done," National Hurricane Center's Max Mayfield warned the day Katrina lashed the Gulf Coast.

"I don't buy the 'fog of war' defense," Brown told the AP in an interview Wednesday. "It was a fog of bureaucracy."

- Bush declared four days after the storm, "I don't think anybody anticipated the breach of the levees" that pushed deadly floodwaters into New Orleans. He later clarified, saying officials believed, wrongly, after the storm passed that the levees had survived. But the transcripts and video show there was plenty of talk about that possibility even before the storm—and Bush was worried too.

White House deputy chief of staff Joe Hagin, Lieutenant Gen. Kathleen Blanco and Brown discussed hints of a levee breach the day the storm hit.

"I talked on the president twice today, once in Cleveland and then again on Air Force One," Brown said. "He's obviously watching the television a lot, and he had some questions about the flooding. He's asking questions about repairs of levees."

- Louisiana officials angrily blamed the federal government for not being prepared for the transcripts shows they were still praising FEMA as the storm neared toward the Gulf Coast and even two days after wind. "I think a lot of the criticism FEMA has been subject to in the past year has really paid off," Col. Jeff Smith, Louisiana's emergency preparedness deputy director, said during the Aug. 28 briefing. AP

3 charged in record UK bank heist

LONDON — THREE PEOPLE WERE CHARGED Wednesday in connection with the record 53.1 million pound (78 million euro, 902 million) robbery at a cash depot in southeast England a week ago, police said.

They included car dealer John Boyle, 37, charged with conspiracy to rob the Securitas depot at Tonbridge, Kent, and with kidnapping the depot's manager and his wife and young son.

The others were Stuart Boyle, 27, charged with conspiracy to rob, and Kim Shackleton, 29, charged with handling stolen goods, a spokesperson for Kent Police said, in an investigation effort to solve the extraordinary case.

The three — the first to be charged in connection with the heist — were to appear at Maidstone magistrates court in Kent at 9:30 a.m. Thursday.

"I remain pleased with the progress of this case," Kent Police assistant chief constable Adrian Leppard, who is heading up the investigation, said in a statement.

"This investigation is likely to continue for some months and possibly years as we track down those responsible and indeed all of the stolen money," he said.

"Forensic teams will rely on thorough and painstaking detective work, something we are very good at in Kent."

A Kent Police spokesperson added that a second arrest scheduled on Monday has since been released on bail.

Elizabeth Howe, chief crown prosecutor in Kent, said: "I have been working closely with the investigation team from the start. We have preferred these very serious charges after this examination of the existing evidence."

Her News advertisers, quoting police sources, said police had found "a substantial amount of money" during a fourth day of investigations at a country estate in southeast England.

The gang that carried out the robbery, said to be six strong, kidnapped depot manager Colin Dixon, 53, who lived in nearby Sherenden, and held his wife Lynne, 48, and 9-year-old son Craig hostage.

They were then left tied up, along with 11 other workers at the site, as the robbers fled with 53,114,750 pounds in cash.

The haul was more than double the amount taken in the previous record heist of 26.5 million pounds stolen from a Belfast bank in December 2004.

Forensic experts were examining a white truck thought to have been used to carry the loot out of the depot, in a sophisticated heist that involved the abduction of the facility's manager and his family.

Staff at the Tonbridge depot returned to work Wednesday for the first time since the cash's robbery, branches said, adding that 19 members of staff who were also held by the gang were still getting counseling.

"We are just trying to get back to normal," company spokesperson Carol Sartorius said.

Some 30 officers remained on duty to search 600 vehicles during road checks at four key locations across Kent overnight Tuesday and asked motorists if they had seen anything in the area on the night of the robbery. AFP

Top Islamic Jihad commander killed as blast blows up his car

GAZA — ISLAMIC JIHAD'S MOST SENIOR commander in the Gaza Strip was killed on Wednesday by an explosion that tore through his car, the Palestinian militant group said, blaming the Israeli army, which denied involvement.

In the occupied West Bank, Palestinian gunmen shot dead an Israeli in a general motion outside a Jewish settlement, the army said.

Witnesses in the church of Abu al-Waleed al-Shahed, a leader of Islamic Jihad's armed wing in the Gaza Strip, said his car blew up as he opened one of its doors and that an Israeli military aircraft was flying overhead at the time.

The Israeli army denied any involvement, saying it did not operate in Gaza.

But Interior Minister Ehud Olmert said: "Whoever is behind Shahed's eliminated in the past few days gave his orders and don't act to prevent an attempted attack, to reach the murderers by surprise before they can get an attack rolling."

In a speech ahead of March 28 general elections, Olmert vowed Israel would not permit "a single launcher of rockets or even a moment of rest. We will rock them out everywhere and reach them ... without compromise or hesitation, day and night."

Describing Zeidalah's death as an assassination, Islamic Jihad's spokesperson Nafez Azzam threatened Israel with "collective and very painful revenge for these crimes."

Prospects for a resumption of negotiations have dimmed since the Islamic militant group Hamas, sworn to Israel's destruction, fourth decorated Abbas's Fatah faction in a Jan. 25 election.

Olmert said Israel regarded Hamas as an enemy but said it pursued even "the slightest flicker of hope" for peace.

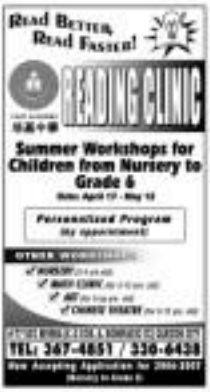
Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said on a visit to Venice that Israel didn't rule out talks with Hamas if it recognized the Jewish state and renounced violence.

"I never say never," she told reporters.

Clearing the way for revenge, U.S. backers of Islamic Jihad gunmen gathered outside Gaza's Shifa Hospital after hearing that Zeidalah's body had been taken there.

"This is an Israeli crime against Islamic Jihad leadership and must not go unpunished," said Bashir Habib, an Islamic Jihad leader.

Abu Ahlidh, a spokesperson for the group, said: "Our resistance will not slow down or, hereafter, Islamic Jihad's armed wing will not remain silent and will respond with all its might to everything." The death of its leader "will not deter us." Reuters



Republic of the Philippines
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Bldg., EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

SEC MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 4
Series of 2006

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS

The Commission, in its Resolution No. 126, Series of 2006, approved the adoption in its rules and regulations of the following accounting standards, as approved by the Accounting Standards Council:

Philippine Financial Reporting Standards (PFRS)[1]

PFRS	IFRS	Title	Effectivity Date	Supersedes
PFRS 6	IFRS 6	Exploration for and Evaluation of Mineral Resources	1/1/06	
PFRS 7	IFRS 7	Financial Instruments: Disclosures	1/1/07	PAS 30 & 32 (in part)

Amendments to Philippine Accounting Standards (PAS)[2]

Title	Effectivity Date
Amendments to PAS 39: Cash Flow Hedge Accounting of Forecast Intragroup Transactions	1/1/06
Amendments to PAS 39: The Fair Value Option	1/1/06
Amendments to PAS 39 and PFRS 4: Financial Guarantee Contracts	1/1/06
Amendments to PAS 1: Capital Disclosures	1/1/07

The above-mentioned effectivity date refers to annual periods beginning on or after the effectivity date indicated.

Copies of these new/revised accounting standards will be available at the offices of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA).

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Issued this 23rd of February 2006 at EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **FE B. BARIN**
Chairperson

[1] Philippine Financial Reporting Standards correspond to the adopted International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

[2] Philippine Accounting Standards correspond to the adopted International Accounting Standards (IAS).

Bush, Indian PM seal landmark nuclear accord

NEW DELHI, US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Thursday sealed a nuclear deal seen as the bedrock of a new strategic partnership, with both hailing the pact as historic.

The agreement came during intensive talks in the Indian capital which also touched on bilateral economic ties and cooperation in space travel, agriculture and health, officials said.

"I was particularly pleased that we have reached an understanding on the implementation of our agreement on civilian nuclear cooperation of July 18, 2005 ... we have made historic today," Singh said.

"We concluded today an historic agreement on nuclear power ... It is a necessary agreement, it will help both our peoples," added Bush at the joint press conference.

The deal, billed as the highlight of Bush's three-day trip to India, overcame Washington's need to seek approval from the US Congress and countries of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to lift restrictions on sharing civilian nuclear technology with India.

"Now it is for the US to go to Congress for the necessary amendments and it will approach the Nuclear Suppliers Group," Singh said.

Thursday's agreement capped months of negotiations after Bush and Singh agreed on the broad outline of a deal during Singh's visit to Washington last July.

Bush also paid glowing tribute to burgeoning Indo-US ties, declaring India a partner on different.

"We are working as partners to make the world safer," Bush told reporters, stressing the sharing of information on, and determination to defeat, terrorism.

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush, left, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in a joint press conference at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India, March 2. AP

"We are cooperating on the military front," he said, also praising India's help in spreading democracy, notably in Afghanistan.

"We worked as partners responding to the tsunami," which struck south Asia on Dec. 26, 2004, killing tens of thousands.

"Our relationship is changing dramatically" for US-India dealings.

New Delhi was much closer to Moscow than Washington during the Cold War. But the collapse of the Soviet Union followed by reform and economic liberalization in New Delhi since the 1990s started a shift towards the United States. AFP

Bush Afghan visit brings reminders of US setbacks

By Tom Raum

WASHINGTON... WHAT SHOULD have been a triumphant mission for President George W. Bush to Afghanistan also set out as a vivid reminder of setbacks in his war against terrorism. The campaign ran a course at a time of increasing violence and drug trafficking in the country. And Osama bin Laden remains at large, more than four years after Bush designated his capture, "dead or alive."

Bush, who flew to salute Afghanistan at a lowest for ensuring democracies, had to confront the reality of a news conference in Kabul on Wednesday when two of the four questions put to him and Afghan President Hamid Karzai dealt with the fugitive architect of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

"I am confident he will be brought to justice," Bush said with a formula he uses when the many military analysts. Bush suggested the issue was "not a matter of if ... but when."

Bin Laden is widely believed to be in hiding in rugged, remote areas along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, most likely in Pakistan.

"The problem is, the longer this goes on, the harder it becomes," said Gen. Campbell, former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asia and the Pacific. "The word out is that Bin Laden is unfettered to north of Pakistan, and can take out and be protected by the local community with something close to impunity," he said.

Campbell said Islamic anger aroused the West over cartoons published in Europe depicting the prophet Muhammad have helped to build conservative sympathy in the region for bin Laden.

Still, Bush's visit was important, particularly at a time when conditions are worsening, because it "helps remind Americans that the job is not done, far from it, in Afghanistan," said Campbell, now with the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Bush's surprise four-hour stopover on his way to India comes as the president is suffering at home from near-record low approval ratings put both questions about his conduct of the war on terrorism, long his strongest issue in public opinion polls.

Violence linked to al-Qaida and other terror groups is increasing both in Iraq and Afghanistan. And the administration is coming under widespread bipartisan attack for its decision—now under review—to let a Dubai-owned company based in the United Arab Emirates take over management of some terminals at six of the nation's largest ports.

Analysts suggest that many of the destructive tactics used in Iraq, including suicide bombings and self-made roadside explosives, are being used with increasing frequency in Afghanistan.

More than two dozen suicide attacks in recent months have fueled Afghan suspicions that al-Qaida and Taliban militants are using Pakistan as base for launching terror strikes in Afghanistan. AP

Blast near US consulate in Karachi ahead of Bush visit

KARACHI... A CAR BOMB DETONATED THE US consulate in Karachi killed six Americans and at least four other people on Thursday, but Pakistan's George W. Bush said terrorists and killers would not stop his scheduled visit to Pakistan.

The blast came less than 48 hours before Bush was due to hold talks in Pakistan on Saturday though he is not expected to visit the southern city of Karachi during his short visit.

Addressing a news conference in New Delhi just hours after the blast, Bush said he wouldn't change his plans to go to Pakistan at the end of his three-day visit to India. This is Bush's first visit to south Asia.

"We have briefed on the bombings. We have lost at least nine US citizens in the bombing, a foreign service officer," Bush told reporters in the Indian capital.

"Terrorists and killers are not going to prevent me from going to Pakistan." Reuters

Thaksin pleads with foes to drop poll boycott

THAKSIN AFP

BANGKOK—THAI PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra pleaded Thursday with opposition parties to drop their boycott of next month's elections, as he lifted his candidacy to stand in the troubled polls.

Thaksin was greeted by hundreds of cheering supporters who handed him pink roses and chanted, "Fight, fight" to his entered the downtown Bangkok stadium where the Election Commission held the nomination process.

Reasons that Thaksin might accept to be removed have swirled around Bangkok all week, turning the stock market and leaving top military leaders to reassure the public that they would run out of politics.

But with only four largely unknown parties standing against Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais) party, the premier hoped the leading opposition today that boycotted the snap polls on April 2 to restore credibility to the elected process.

All the parties have in effect already won seats in Parliament. The ruling party takes seats by Democrats typical stalwarts to use in the election," Thaksin said.

The Democrat Party was the dominant force in Thai politics for decades, but was swamped by Thaksin's TRT in 2001 and 2005 elections.

Amid swirling rumor protests demanding his resignation, the Democrats and her other opposition parties have boycotted the polls, demanding that Thaksin first resume to constitutional reforms.

If the opposition parties change their minds, they have until Friday afternoon to name their candidates for party members.

Thaksin urged the opposition to take a broader focus, emphasizing that, since the military government has dictated wider party reforms during the ban by far his campaign for democracy.

"Using last year's referendum to promote democracy for the government to hold elections, but to create a country we can agree for democracy has been done," he said. "Thaksin told reporters.

But Democrat leader Abhisit Vejjajiva last Wednesday ruled out any compromise with Thaksin, saying to stick to their boycott as part of the party's fight against "dictatorship."

"Unless it is ready to step aside, even the better people, this problem is not possible under the guise of democracy," Abhisit told foreign reporters. AFP

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OPINION

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The original sin

THE PHILIPPINE JESUITS ARE NOT THE ONLY religious order trying to shepherd their community in these trying times. However, they do enjoy a reputation for intellectual rigor and mental discipline that traditionally guarantees them widespread attention, if not agreement. Since the present political crisis began, the Philippine province of the Society of Jesus has made the effort to publish—and publicize—guidelines for discerning the situation to their fellow religious, faculty, staff and even students.

EDITORIAL

The Jesuits, since the Third Republic, have had a tradition of being actively engaged in the political sphere in pursuit of reforms. The national condition prior to martial law was best expressed by Jesuit Fr. Buenaventura Dotiz's invocation before the feast of the Nation Addrest, after which event, Ferdinand Marcos was assaulted by paranoiacs, igniting the Film Quarter Storm. Dotiz (a former presidential chaplain) became a delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention, a tradition continued by Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J. The various Assocos in the Philippines have as much a connection to the grass roots as any other organization, because of their decades-long humanities programs.

After its initial set of guidelines, issued in July last year shortly after the question of legitimacy began to hang over the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Philippine province of the Jesuits has issued another one. It is being widely discussed in Catholic, non-Catholic and even irreligious and thus profoundly secular circles. The immediate cause of concern to the Jesuits in Presidential Proclamation 1017, the circumstances surrounding its issuance, and the behavior of officials tasked with implementing both the proclamation and General Order No. 5 to no uncertain terms, military intervention to topple the government is condemned as dangerous and immoral. But equally forcefully, the government's reaction is roundly criticized by the guidelines. If the country must shudder at the specter of military adventurism egged on by civilian provocateurs, it must also recognize government's culpability in this emerging state of affairs, the Jesuits said.

Point 4 of the guidelines says, "The present administration's actions to frustrate legitimate constitutional means of reform and accountability must be held largely responsible for the present crisis. Government's constant attempts to evade accountability and true reform have made the military solution seem attractive and insensible to some." It goes on to enumerate what sober and sensible people have recognized all along as the only effective antidotes to further strife and uncertainty: "Thus, it is necessary that the following be addressed with greater urgency: the search for truth on the many controversies of the recent past; the revamp of Comelec and other necessary electoral reforms; reform in the military; and the continuing search for solutions to the problems of poverty and inequality that beset most of our people."

However, partisan by over-analysis it not a Jesuit trait, and so they suggest concrete steps in he states. These range from the unconstitutional and pious ("Gatherings of prayer for peace and a non-violent resolution of the crisis") to the practical and not illegal ("Gatherings to exchange reliable information, and to discern collectively in the light of emerging developments") to the confessional and even rebellious ("Expressions and actions of protest against the curtailment of democratic freedoms in Proclamation No. 1017").

There must surely be a risk that a government that has forbidden protests in general will find it tempting to forbid protests against the implementation of a state of national emergency in the list of forbidden acts. After all, to loosely borrow a concept from Ayn Rand, the banality of evil includes a fetish for list-making. And lists of every nature do exist, as Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor let slip, when he tried to smoke Randy David by saying he wasn't on the government's list.

When the problem and cautious decide on a confrontational cause of action, government surely must take pause to determine if the cure isn't worse than what it considers to be a disease.

PET recount shows 'widespread cheating'

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA IS AN EXPERT at having himself elected leader in the House of Representatives, but he is not acting like a true leader in the congressional midst him. When policemen arrived to arrest five party-list representatives, the Speaker, instead of joining his fast down and telling them the Constitution prohibits any member of Congress from being arrested while Congress is in session, negotiated with the cops for the lawmakers be put in his custody temporarily, after which they would be surrendered to the police.

That made many congressmen very angry. "He should not have negotiated with the police," Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. angrily said during the session. "He should have told them, 'No, you cannot arrest them!'"

The Constitution is very clear. No member of Congress charged with an offense whose penalty does not exceed six years can be arrested while Congress is in session. Congress is in session.

The lawmakers are not asking for any special treatment, only what the law mandates. Like any ordinary citizen, they don't want to be arrested unless there is a warrant of arrest. And no arrest warrant can be issued unless a judge personally investigates has been conducted. And no such thing has not been done.

The law is clearly on the side of the five congressmen and the House, so why is the Speaker acting so meekly pundit? I know he is afraid his actions might anger President Macapagal-Arroyo and drive away on her promise to support Charter change, without which JDV's ambition to be prime minister will not be realized.

But if JDV will behave the way he is behaving now after he becomes PM, she will not vote for him? If he wants to be the leader, said a congressman, he should act like one.

* * *

A staff member of the Speaker, by the way, wrote a letter to the editor to commend me a recent column regarding the huge awards given by JDV to visiting heads of state and other foreign dignitaries. The award, called the "Congressional Medal of Achievement,"

[illegible] BEEN SOME THREE (MAY BE) FEW months, I can only recall the week I saw at the Cadet San Angelo, the papal worldwide held for Pope Paul II. "Festina Lente" (Clearly in haste). That is a maxim to his gift in politics "for taking action without truly or impossible."

Perhaps the problem today is that we are trying too hard to recreate Edsa, hope to trigger the moment so closely duplicated in January 2001. But the cause of the explosion is no more quite the original, and we must learn to create a new Edsa (including spare for an Edsa "we as me" (for all you disciples of Austin Powers).

Before Edsa 1, we thought that there were only two ways to end entrenched rule. One was through the great economic revolutions, by taking away the real economic privileges they were to wring out and take the bourgeois path of parliamentary struggle. Either the armed path, effective but chaotic, or the legal path, civilized but effete.

Then Edsa 1 built elements of a Palace coup, undemocratic and right wing, but it couldn't have triumphed without the millions of civilians massed outside the camps—certainly democratic and literally middle-of-the-road. Even before, though, Edsa 1 was over, the people knew they wanted much cleaning either. And while it began with hopes of victory through the ballot, it ended by repudiating the manipulated polls of Feb. 7, 1986. It was revolutionary all right, but not through blood. You [illegible] of the other hand the conservatives" and, instead, by convincing Enrile from Edsa and Ramadan. For Mao, revolution is not a dinner party. Yeah, the Pinos said, it is one jolly-festa.

Hosting the long struggle for democracy, how many people could have imagined the mild game scenario at Edsa? I recall that after the Barangay Bandanna declared Marcos the election victor, and Cory Aquino called for civil disobedience and the boycott of Marcos-affiliated companies, Manila was paralyzed and stunned. She can march till the chops, but when the thin strike, we will remain standing.

But after we regained our democracy our [illegible] have succeeded in the presidency of Cory, Ramos and Estrada as well as other city, senators, that there is no record of it having been created by Congress, said lawyer Ben Francisco Tatad.

The citation says: "Award is bestowed on behalf of the Filipino nation and in acceptance with Resolution No. 433 of the House of Representatives, Congress of the Philippines."

But Resolution 433, Tatad said, was filed by Representatives Crispin Beltran, Rafael Mariano, Rodolfo Catalla, Liza Maza, Satur Ocampo and Joel Virador (the same party-list representatives who have either been arrested or when the police went to arrest) directing the committee on labor and employment and foreign affairs to conduct a public investigation [illegible] on the violation of the implementation of the government's ban on deployment of Filipino workers in Iraq. Nothing about a Congressional Medal of Achievement, Tatad said.

In his letter, the Speaker's spokesman said the new version of Resolution 433 never filed in different years. He also said that the award is given by the House of Representatives alone, and that is why Senate President Franklin Drilon has no signature on it.

Nevertheless, the Speaker is called "Congressional Medal of Achievement"? It should be called "House Medal of Achievement" or, more accurately, "Speaker's Medal of Achievement." Or he? And why does the citation say that it "is bestowed on behalf of the Filipino nation" when it is bestowed only on behalf of JDV?

The same column said JDV also received, on his own, the Philippine-Taiwan Parliamentarians' Friendship Award, with all the members of the House as members. In so doing, Tatad said, JDV officially recognized the government of Taiwan and violated the Philippines' One-China policy and violated the Philippines' One-China policy and violated the policy that there is only a diplomatic person from mainland China, which has always insisted that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part of it.

The letter from the Speaker's office is decidedly quiet on that score.

* * *

President Arroyo has said in a speech that she received in the Presidential Electoral Tribunal theory she won the 2004 election. Yan nalipajero.

Now, said opposition vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday, on the contrary, the ongoing recount shows widespread cheating both in the vice presidential and presidential tallies, she said.

Two of her lawyers, Rufus Rodriguez and Elvin Bellosillo, said that when the ballot boxes were opened, the election returns there were found to have been substituted. They do not tally with the copies from the Commission on Elections. Rodriguez and the opposition party-Cagayo from those three rally with one another, but the copies in Congress (which were the ones canvassed by the legislators) don't, although they have the same numbers. There are seven copies of election returns, one each for the different election bodies, one for Congress, and one each for the major political parties. They should all be the same since they are supposed to be copies of the same ER.)

Furthermore, the ballots seem to have been written by no one person. The full names of the candidates, including the middle initials, even written on the ballots. That is not normal; the two lawyers said. Voters usually write only the last names.

What's more, the ballots do not contain the signatures of genuine ballots from the Comelec, they added.

Did DBM and Neli de Castro win fair and square? Yes he the judge.

'Festina Lente'

Passion for Reason

René C. Pangalangan

people incited anew from large causes toward concrete projects at personal level. Those hope that this ideology is needs, social movement is about life, shelter, schools, ideology is a game of politicians, social activism is about the needs of real people.

There have a point, but there is a time to retire to first principles.

So where are the Edsa crowds now? Before it is a litany of martyrs'), just like Edsa 1 was any humongous "what if" until it happened.

Maybe the crowds just don't go to rallies anymore. Perhaps they no longer express their anger and alienation by marching, and would rather speak their truth through blogs or e-groups or text messages. The rallies must stop being in the style of the Film Quarter Storm, and accept that for the youth, other public spaces like the Pinas Miranda but in self-selected "virtual" and real communities. Take photos of rally dispersals and post them on the Internet! In the same, let their indignation build up electronically, and let the explosion it finally in rallies only in low-key and episodic bursts.

Maybe the allure of protest rallies has waned for the middle classes. It is now March, the start of summer, and even radical elite activists are preoccupied with Black Edsa reunion rallies self-sacrifice, but for the rest a crowd, rallies are a money-eater. In that case, let us go for quality, not quantity, lest the more we dream yesterdays.

Maybe it is time for a network of issue-oriented groups capable of People Power, and those at Edsa 1 have invaluable entrusted in their concern. In that case, let us turn to remote professional groups (the eminent lawyers, led by Integrated Bar president Joel Cadiz, are not so much today in defiance of Proclamation 1017), academic [illegible] UP Diliman has declared itself "state of emergency-free," leading a rally here to shoulder. Also, parents might form one! Yes, my colleague will convene future social activism to a host of apocalypse week), and the nineteenth-century organization Cherry Guest, Anyone).

Let them do so, not just problem-like 1986, but concrete movements to help the poor in the future and now. Build a home, adopt a child, adopt a school, adopt a whole street-but even. Repeat the state, bypass the political parties, bypass anything between us! The Philippine is insanely anarchist, anyway, rugged individualistic, good party bourgeois-feel-down, humanistic. Edsa 1 worked because it wasn't scripted. Had some considered command tried to organize it, they would have messed it up.

We must find new ways for social action, to create the conditions and pulverize people into action. If God sends us another Edsa moment, fine, hallelujah. But remember that the true Edsa moment was the martyrdom of Ninoy Aquino at the tarmac, and while a whole society may march and shout to protest, the [illegible] must have had to be borne in quiet dignity by his widow Cory in the solitude of her heart. "It's the current that is in need of heroes," said Senate leader in "Galileo Galilei." How can a nation be worthy that passively profits from the widow's pain?

* * *

Edsa makes a few "brief shining moments[illegible]" and disregards the years of struggle that gave it [illegible]. Justice J.B.L. Reyes has said that, for decision, the "value of the lowest of Emancipation is not that it tells but that it hangs." Proclamation 1017 is the ordeal that should send us for the coming tempest. If the mischief of People Power is that it much heart-dumping drama, with Proclamation 1017, [illegible] may yet have delivered to us an Edsa moment on a silver platter.

* * *

Comments to pangalangan@gmail.com

Under the gun

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

[illegible] evidence in the country."

Amid mounting clamor from a wide section, including church leaders, for the restoration of the democratic rights of press and due Philippine citizens, the Arroyo administration, members of Congress including administration and opposition members, the economic management of the Cabinet, and civil society organizations, for the lifting of the proclamation, the Palace stood pat on withholding the words to ease it if she was "satisfied" that the government had "control of the situation."

The basis being given to this fear "control of the situation" is defined. But based on developments after the proclamation, the President now faces a broader terrain of alignment calling for an end to the state of national emergency and the arrogation of many emergency powers to the police and Armed Forces, the key wrongful institution that now holds the key to her ability to control events in the civil sector that has now become more restrictive than it had been before the proclamation.

Reference to "control of the situation" invites comparison. When Marcos declared martial law, he saw to it that all his flanks were covered, he had prepared for the martial law declaration for more than a year. He had full control of the Armed Forces and the national police when he declared martial law. The chain of command was firmly held together. All potential sources of resistance had been neutralized. Congress was closed. All opposition leaders were either arrested or intimidated. The Supreme Court had been brought under control. The media were completely controlled to one full-owned, three newspaper offices, except for one, and the independent TV stations were shut down. Journalists and editors ragged as regime opponents were rounded up or the workplaces of all media.

The political and media crackdown was so thorough that Marcos did not face the problem of giving martial law guidelines on when they could publish and not publish. There was no Congress to which opposition members could denounce martial law. There was no media in which to protest the clampdown. There was only the silence of terror, the powerless spokespersons and lobbyists for the U.S. and other governments hesitated to raise their voices, everything was done citizen one followed the rules handed down by Marcos or he went to jail. There was no gray area. But the journalists who were not detained, the citizens who went to jails that always propaganda corps, took for either jobs, or go underground. Choices were clear.

Now, things under control, all that Arroyo needed was an incident to justify the martial law proclamation and as a trigger for a meticulously prepared plan for a national emergency. The trigger-jig incident was fabricated, the alleged scheme of their Defense Minister Avelino Cruz, Presidential Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya and Armed Forces chief Gen. Generoso Senga to stage a coup d'etat, hastily anything was in place to put things under control. She was accordant of full support from the chain of command. Congress has remained content, none of the opposition leaders and media and newspapers were not shut down. There were so many loose ends. Even if she wanted to tie the loose ends, she did not have the means to do so.

Her rhetoric for the proclamation echoed Marcos' declaration. But unlike Marcos, she could not use prior habeas corpus to arrest opposition leaders, to organize resistance to the regime. This is why it can be argued that the danger to the state of emergency rule, despite the President will still does trouble. She will be emulsioned by forces that appear to be spinning out of control, metaphorically speaking, after losing sense of balance as prepared by emergency powers.

Women's rights and human rights

"CEDAW SO RAPA: KABABAYEN NI AMAWAN lang!" is the theme chosen for this year's observance of Women's Month, which kicked off last Wednesday with a lively program at the Amoranto Stadium, hosted by the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and the Quezon City government under the auspices of Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

CEDAW is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, described as an international "bill of rights" for women which all governments around the world that have signed and ratified have committed to implement.

The focus on CEDAW stems from the fact that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Convention, as well as the fact that the Philippines was among the first countries to sign it. A Filipina, former Ambassador and UN Undersecretary Rosario "Rose" Manalo.

Wednesday's observance, though, gained significance in the light of the state of emergency, especially the invasion of Presidential [illegible]

* * *

IN THE PRESS conference convened at the end of the government's speech, including BCR-PP Chair Senator Sen. Commission on Human Rights Chair Purificacion Quisumbing, and Senator NEDPH Chair and CEDAW expert Senator Jovito de Dios, explored the link between women's rights and human rights in the country.

Dr. Diaz reminded the public about the outspoken that "real fundamentals" hoped to win for today's women their basic rights, while Quisumbing pointed out that "in many Arroyo's abuse rights actions they are empowered to be free from poverty, violence and all forms of discrimination and oppression." The also noted that "there is overlapping between rights violations committed by political adversaries to our enemy which Proclamation 1017 seems to have sanctioned."

Quisumbing highlighted women's roles as "peacemakers and peacekeepers" in the context of today's political crisis, while calling attention to the threats against the enjoyment of such basic rights as freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of speech, and freedom of be-

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

lief and conscience.

I was invited to read a statement at the same press conference as a representative of some of the NGOs. My statement, under the title, "Women and Ownership: Women's Rights in the Context of Human Rights," is below in full:

* * *

TODAY marks the first day of Women's Month, which two celebrate you'll not only because from national President's Day falls on March 8, but also because the women's movement in the Philippines, over the decades, has made its mark, huge, in dynamic and so involved in a number of national issues that one day no longer suffices to celebrate victims and highlight women's role in building civil society.

But it is right be useful to remember the roots of International Women's Day which began as both a protest and a way of planning. After more than a hundred young immigrant women garment workers in New York City died in a fire, the leaders and friends of the young women, as well as members of the emerging labor movement, launched a massive march through New York's garment district to protest the terrible conditions in the city's sweatshops.

That event is today remembered and commemorated as the start of the labor movement. But though in the Philippines, women are celebrated for the entire month of March.

Still, let us not forget the historical roots of our celebration, and the reasons why we, as women, and the present state blocks spurred and the movement for reform and women's rights and equality that is gave birth to.

* * *

TODAY, we remember women whose deaths in recent disasters have made the country and the world focus on the poverty that assails Filipino women, as well as on their strength and resilience. We mourn the women of the Ditsa campsite, who scrapped the rubbish of the landfills in search of trash they can sell, and whose presence in the long and unruly queue of commuters and game-show audience members serves as their desperation as well as their boundless resilience.

We mourn, too, as a representative of women's NGOs but more specifically and personally, as a sister in Philippine and Human Policy, the 60 women from Barangay Guinsaugon in Southern Leyte, who perished in the mudslide that buried their entire village last month. The women had been gathered at the village's multipurpose hall for a meeting, including the activities that would launch for Women's Month, when disaster struck.

But this is also an occasion for protest, in the midst of crisis, to remind ourselves that we no longer don't pose to be as Filipino citizens, as women and as members of women's organizations. The 20th anniversary of the Edsa People Power uprising reminded us of the citizenry's power, and of the fact that we have used it in the years of protest against the dictatorship and in the struggle to stem a corrupt presidency. It is time all of us women put together our voices and our strength, and to make it clear that a common ground for resolution and action to defend civil freedoms and democracy.

But chance for this year's observance is "CEDAW: Our Rights, Kabalikan ng Kababaihan," "The People's CEDAW: Rights for Women." It calls our attention to the landmark document that guarantees the basic human rights of women, and the duty of the state, which ever civilians or militaries are in power, to protect and promote these rights.

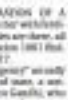
"On the night of August [illegible], which was Sunday at 7 o'clock in the afternoon, the gunmen were going to the residence of the hockey [illegible], so we ran the security which she [illegible] then there were presenting, and with him was his riding Bella Marie de Francia, the wife of his nephew the sangguniang mayor, in a coach, having the three minutes behind. When they arrived at the residence of the Sangguniang Bayan, the assailants came out to meet them, and, seeing the three women in the area, struck her with a shipper so that she died instantaneously, and he to and again once he said statement of Sr. Inquisitor.

"The three women were also shot by the assailants and already gone into the Society's house; and he was an educator and a corporate lawyer, together with the sangguniang mayor, and some soldiers, with an order to surround the church and bring

Gloria and Indira

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S DECLARATION OF A state of emergency has led people to compare her with Indira Gandhi. Certainly, the shifting constituents are there, all the same to the wording of Arroyo's Proclamation 1081 [illegible] to way into Mr Arroyo's Proclamation 1017.

But Ms Arroyo's choice of a "state of emergency" as only evokes memories of another woman head of state, a contemporary of Marcos. I am referring to Indira Gandhi, who imposed emergency rule on India for 19 months from 1975 to 1977. That was in January, referred to as the "emergency," at often used as one of India's darkest periods. It was also marked by rule under Marcos.



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Privilege

The full names of the two leaders tell us they were both born into privilege. Gloria Macapagal's lawyer father was a president of the Philippines back in the 1960s. India's Indira Gandhi came from a prominent Brahmin caste family. Her father was Jawaharlal Nehru, renowned as one of modern India's founders.

Gandhi was initially reluctant to enter politics. Her father was opposed to nepotism so she did not run for public office, helping instead to manage political campaigns for her father and husband. Indira Gandhi (no relation to Mahatma Gandhi, by the way) after the death of her father in 1964 that she ran for office, easily winning a seat in Parliament.

She rose quickly through the ranks, serving in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, earning respect for her skillful handling of conflicts, including tensions between India and Pakistan.

After Shastri's death in 1966, Indira Gandhi became India's third prime minister, and the first woman to head the world's largest democracy. India progressed during the early years of her leadership. Chronic food shortages gave way to agricultural surpluses, while India becoming a major industrial power. Indira Gandhi also pushed for India's industrialization and the development of its science and technology.

But Indira Gandhi's own personal life was troubled. Several of her biographies, notably "Indira: The Life of Indira Nehru Gandhi" by Katherine Frank, describe her as bitterly and tragically estranged from her husband Feroze Gandhi, with the famous father. Her marriage was troubled and she pursued much of her affection on her son Sanjay Gandhi, creating an hint for political advice.

Indira Gandhi was criticized prime minister in 1971, losing popularity declined rapidly with accusations of corruption, particularly as economic conditions worsened in the late 1970s. A judge in the High Court of Allahabad found her guilty of having a government employee for the elections campaign and ruled that she was technically elections fraud. Indira Gandhi was ordered to resign her seat in Parliament, which in office otherwise stripping down as prime minister.

Gandhi appealed to the Supreme Court, which ruled that she could remain in as a member of Parliament but could not participate in its proceedings.

As the judicial battles unfolded, the public clamor for Gandhi's ouster increased. On June 26, she was able to get a state of emergency declared.

I don't know if this Arroyo's handlers actually might have drawn inspiration from Indira Gandhi's emergency. Perhaps they loved have, during the emergency, human rights violations increased dramatically. There were many arrests and detentions and many opposition leaders were jailed. Moreover, censorship was imposed, getting [illegible] media now.

Despite the controversies around emergency rule, India actually prospered economically. There was enhanced peace efforts with Pakistan, and the country's economy grew. The economic legacy of reforms are unknown more harmfully, this can imagine the reform benefits overtime during India's emergency, similar to what we've been seeing in the Philippines during the months.

In 1977, conditions for she last regained the support of the Indian people. Gandhi called for elections. She was defeated, unable to win even a seat in Parliament.

The government that succeeded Gandhi was inept, and eventually Indira Gandhi returned to power, but her life was marked by ruler tragedy after another. Her favorite son, Sanjay, died in a plane crash in 1980. Indira Gandhi herself was brutally assassinated in 1984 by one of her own Sikh bodyguards.

Remembering EPR

The controversies around Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo are similar to those that plagued Indira Gandhi's leadership. The sense is that we are at a watershed moment in the beginning of accountability and of governance.

Both Ms Arroyo and Indira Gandhi chose to alert those in need by clamping down on dissent. In the case of the Philippines, when we saw the last few days was badly a countermeasure of her political opponents. Ms Arroyo's declaration of EPR unpolled has September. We now s "to permit, ex rally" people, the forceful dispersal of protest rallies, the seizure of assemblies of leftist leaders. After the state of emergency was declared, no one has ordering the arrest of members of Congress and the raiding of a newspaper office. The state of emergency was probably deliberately vague, open to some perverse misinterpretations of the law, as we saw in the arrest of Sen. Crispin Beltran using a warrant issued back in 1985, during the Marcos regime.

The danger is that Indira Gandhi's experience might inspire the Arroyo administration to overstep its constitutional CPR powers, and that EPR might deteriorate into a series of chronic preemptive responses, only to arrogate a state of emergency.

There's something about Indira Gandhi that has made her a certain kind in their recollections of her rule. There are flashes of idealism and of her love for India and its people, as she shunned luxuries the rule of a first minister ("She never made meals with a stone had for") and that of a genius, saying leader ("Anger is never without its regulation, but without anger a good one" or "The power to question is the basis of all human progress").

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has at her disposal to rule by projecting the image of a no-nonsense technocrat, as economist with a Ph.D. from the University of the Philippines's relatively tame on growing things done. If she could pick up more from Indira Gandhi's state emergency rule, historians might eventually be kinder to her as well.

Following in the footsteps of Marcos

LETTERS

FROM ALL INDICATIONS, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO's state of emergency declaration is a prelude to martial law... the sometimes caveat, the chance of The Daily Tribune and the threat to democratic rights, the specter of opposition members. I can see that Mr Arroyo is following in the footsteps of former President Marcos. Let's go back to history.

In 1971, Marcos called for a Constitutional Convention for the purpose of drawing the 1935 Constitution. The convention was composed of 320 elected delegates, at first headed by former President Carlos P. Garcia, then Lidua Garcia-Roxas by President Diosdado Macapagal.

However, the convention's image was tarnished by a scandal which included the bribing of some delegates into 'voting' against a proposal to prohibit Marcos from staying in power under a new constitution. Marcos' second term was marked by increasing civil strife known as the "First Quarter Storm."

After a series of bombings in Manila claimed to have been carried out by the New People's Army-Communist Party of the Philippines, Marcos wanted of an imminent communist takeover. On Sept. 21, 1972, he issued Proclamation No. 1081 declaring martial law. Thus, he was able to stay in power way beyond the term allowed by the 1935 Constitution. And thus, he assumed dictatorial control over an entire nation. He called his dictatorship "constitutional authoritarianism."

Defending his right to rule by decree, he warned the public: "You will have communists going back and forth, causing the damnable ruin of our country, the killing of people and the rape of women."

—CLEMENCIO, cphoon@gmail.com

Wide spectrum

(The first readers' reactions to Proclamation 1017 paint as wide a spectrum as the one provoked by the Garci tapes.)

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SHOULD BE allowed to govern the country until she finishes her term. Every time the minority protests on the streets, it hurts our economy badly [and erodes] ... wrong signals to local and foreign investors. I view it as moving backward, not forward. Legitimacy does not always result in better lives for the people, good economy and governance. Not everyone will always be pleased by whatever sits in the presidency. Cesarean Aquino was hounded by several coups which rendered her ineffective. Fidel Ramos had his bad eggs, too.

As a Filipino who loves my country (but not the politicians) who rule it, I will keep sending precious dollars to help the economy. Little it may be, but I know it is good for the struggling nation.

The legislators, government leaders and politicians chanting that Filipinos overseas are the modern-day heroes of the country should be one in helping to protect our interests—like our contribution to the OWWs—and to make sure our needs are met. Let see what happened to the farmers who contributed to the coconut levy. happen to it.—Oscar Ingrata, oding-au@comcast.net

* * *

In my office, they're talking about this shameful President from Southeast Asia who, with all those deaths in his short Philippine stint, needs only one landslide in Congress, still had the audacity to declare a state of emergency [read: martial law].

She betrayed the spirit of the People Power in Edsa. She betrayed the Filipino people. She betrayed God who has given her the privilege to lead her people. We are worried back here.—Lou Bellegere, lmbellegere@attbiz.com

* * *

When you have a Marine commandant so swiftly relieved of his position and his duties, in the light of the declaration of a state of emergency, subsequent arrests, closure of The Daily Tribune, witch hunts, finger pointing and fears of martial law... people are bound to ask questions and demand straightforward answers.

The people concerned should have seen this coming—one would be stupid to not have foreseen his scenario. I dare say they brought it upon themselves. No one hollered to give honest straightforward answers which would have quickly defused the growing unrest. Instead, people were left to their own devices to come up with plausible, solid or rubber theories behind the record-breaking relief of the general.

Come to think of it, in the past months, we have all been given the runaround, with no good information, and left in the dark about what's happening in our government and our country.

We don't deserve this. We deserve at the very least a truthful and honest answer. Or maybe the government is looking for a standoff on a larger scale—something reminiscent of Edsa 1 perhaps?—Clarissa Thorpe Soto, cpsoto@gmail.com

* * *

GMA is the best...1017 times over. She's outdoing all the corrupt tactics of past billion-peso politicians combined. She scroll her oaths from Day One, when she promised not to run as president, stating she herself was the source of our nation's division and then claimed "divine intervention" made her run anyway.

Our democracy may be imperfect, but that's no reason to replace it with authoritarian rule, especially if the imperfection lies in one whose legitimacy remains in question.

We'd be fools to think we'll be a "stronger" nation from hereon.—Dennis Torrevampo, dtorrevampo@yahoo.com

* * *

I took offense when the bishops had their photo taken [with a] banner behind identifying them as the silent majority. How can they claim to be part of the silent majority when they had the air time to be heard?

I also took offense at the comment of a senator in front of Fort Bonifacio, calling those who won't come out to be with them "apathetic." It's high time such politicians realized that people in the silent majority are not apathetic. On the contrary, [they] know very well what drives politicians; rather than rock the boat with a not [too] acceptable alternative [they] would rather stay put and go on with their lives.

I am disgusted with those who want the ouster of GMA, claiming to be the silent majority. Such a claim remains to be validated on the streets.—Angie Brat, ang_wood04@yahoo.com

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AIM Celebrates 38 Years of Excellence

Leading By Doing

AIM celebrates its 38th year through Asian leadership and global excellence by maintaining our position as the first and foremost graduate school of business and management in Asia. To lead by doing.

Leading by doing has been one of the cornerstones that has set the AIM education apart. Our students do not make-on thesis alone. They also solve real-life problems and scenarios posed to them by an international faculty with proven track records as academic, business and government leaders.

In the same vein, AIM's long-term strategy for sustaining its leadership in higher education is built on doing - pushing who passes the solutions needed to deliver results (on profitability and growth), creating an investing environment for achieving excellence, proliferating winning systems for greater effectiveness and efficiency. The need to generate greater value for the AIM experience and instill a fresh entrepreneurial spirit among our students to meet the challenges of today's world. Do to 20th year, AIM continues to lead the way!

Internationalization

The further "internationalization" of AIM, as the formation of the International Programs Office has increased and strengthened its strategic ties with academic, bilateral, and multilateral organizations across the globe.

AIM and the World Bank

The World Bank-Institute-AIM as its strategic partner in Asia with training activities of the AIM-World Bank Development Resource Center (DRC). The newly AIM the first private management education institution in the world to be in partnership with the World Bank.

The DRC has two components. The Knowledge for Development Center is a depository library that provides AIM students and the general public with access to more than 20,000 development related multi-media publications of the World Bank and other organizations. The Global Distance Learning Center is dedicated exclusively to delivering virtual linkages via the World Bank's headquarters in Washington, D.C. and various Distance Learning Centers.

AIM/ADB: Partners for Leadership

As part of the AIM-ADB Networking Project, AIM and ADB organized the Joint Workshop on Public Sector Leadership and Management for Results in the Pacific. Officials from member countries in developing member countries in the Pacific and AIM alumni attended the forum.

The event aimed to bring those experienced in providing programs to strengthen public sector leaders to encourage and cooperation together with those who help manage the public sector in the Pacific, to discuss the responsibilities and needs of current capacity building programs and to identify opportunities and means for improving future programs of assistance. The participants identified challenges encountered in their countries and mapped out steps to meet their challenges.

4th Asian Corporate Social Responsibility Awards

The best corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices in the region were recognized in the 4th Annual Asian Center on Corporate Social Responsibility. The awards, presented by the AIM Ramon V. del Rosario Sr. Center for Corporate Social Responsibility, honored close to 200 CSR programs and projects from 10 countries. The Center recognizes best corporate practices in five categories: environment management, education support, poverty alleviation, and policies to promote socially responsible practices.

AIM Experience

AIM is the first Asian graduate management school to have acknowledged as the outstanding ground for Asia-based leaders. Their encouraging, skilled and dedicated faculty members are also dedicated towards the development of men and women who can help build their societies with unwavering purpose and vision.

AIM graduates stand apart because of their AIM experience. Those who successfully undergo the rigorous AIM Experience are characterized by their strategic thinking and innovative action. The AIM experience is "total immersion" management education with an emphasis on progressive-oriented teaching tools and methodologies, and maximized international exposure to Asian business and development trends and processes.

Partnership of Private and Public Sector

The AIM experience will enable it to provide Cross-border for organizations themselves complex challenges and solve problematic such as large deficits and economic crises responsive as well as good vision and effective development organizations.

A unique dimension of managing in Asia is the need to create a close partnership between the private/market sector and the public sector. Both government and civil societies are enhanced with the management of and partnership with the private sector.

The AIM learning experience integrates private sector management principles, entrepreneurship and international development. Aspirations of future are implemented with business management and development management principles, entrepreneurship and the family approach to sort of small consolidated with the private and public sectors.

Asian Business Expertise

AIM continues to shape the region through its contribution to the advancement of Asian Management Practices among over-seven that makes the business school that serves Asia best.

International Exposure to Different Markets

AIM students are given an opportunity to study and visit various Asian economies, thus going from the necessary to the rest of economies.

Quality Quality is ensured in the AIM program by participants oriented faculty, active case learning methodologies, and a wide of on-site learning environment.

Quality is embedded within our program through the pursuit of excellence in management, discipline and performance in the unique challenges of Asian markets. Through our faculty members and participants have made the new faculty of major international accounting institutions.

Relevant AIM is for people who pursue excellence and are determined to succeed. The AIM experience instills focus and discipline. It creates a deepening learning process, that involves long hours inside and outside the class rooms.

Asian influence and accessibility by fostering among students the discipline to master the appropriate management concepts and considerations, and how relevant and practical they are to Asian business. Asian learning processes in turn demand rigor in thinking and action, together with an imaginative and generalist manager viewpoint.

Applied Knowledge Methodology AIM programs are distinguished by practicing management in the real world. Combines both practitioner knowledge and experience of the faculty. Asian learning processes in turn demand rigor in thinking and action, together with an imaginative and generalist manager viewpoint.

Management situations, some from actual companies, are analyzed in the Business and its process real business learning and are applied in case studies used throughout all AIM programs.

Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives

The AIM Alumni
Leadership. Live It.

Since 1968, AIM has prepared its leadership by consistently developing leaders and managers in Asia who are in key positions in top corporations in Asia and in the rest of the world. As socially responsible leaders and managers, the AIM alumni have a key role in ensuring the growth not only of their respective organizations but also the societies to which they belong.

Board of Trustees: Three New Faces from the Alumni

The Board of Trustees took advantage of its upcoming investment and elected as guests to the Board of Trustees. In 2005 three alumni and prominent AIM guests, **Priscila Estrada** (MBA 1970), Founder, President and CEO of Visionary Capital Investors; **Napoleon Nazareno**, (MBA 1979) President and CEO of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Smart Communications; and **Tony Tan Caktiong** (MP 1985), Chairman, President and CEO of Jollibee in 2004 World Entrepreneur of the Year Awardee, joined the Board of Trustees. This further highlights the strategic importance this alumni have in heightening the institution's multi-stakeholder involvement.

Eminent Chinese Leaders Join The AIM Board of Governors

Mr. Long Yongtu is the secretary general of the Boao Forum for Asia, an international organization that aims to promote economic exchanges within the region and the world. In 1992, he was appointed Vice Minister of the first Chief Representative for trade negotiations at MOFTEC, and the Chief Negotiator for China's accession to the World Trade Organization.

Mr. Victor LL. Chu is the founder and chairman of several regional companies, best-known of which is the First Eastern Investment Group, an investment firm involved in the management of direct investments in China and the ASEAN. He is a board member of the World Economic Forum and chairman of the Paris-based IESC Commission on Financial Services and Insurance. He has also served as director and council member of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

International Faculty

AIM strives to ensure an international composition of its faculty who are renowned practitioners and experts of Asian Management Systems. In this regard, we have recently invited several full-time officials of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) who have now joined the AIM faculty.

Dr. Yoshiko Iwasaki – He was the director general of ADB's South Asia Department and concurrently head of its Regional Economic Monitoring Unit. Prof. Iwasaki holds PhD and MA in Economics from Nagoya University in Japan and a PhD in Economics from Stanford University, USA.

Dr. Khaja Mohiuddin – Formerly the country economist of ADB's Southeast Asia Regional Department and was responsible for the Bank's operations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. Prof. Mohiuddin completed his MA in Economics at the University of Washington and his PhD in Macroeconomics at the University of Hawaii, USA.

Dr. Brahm Prakash – He was the director of the Poverty Reduction and Social Development Division of ADB's Regional and Sustainable Development Department. He took his master's degree in Economics and in Economics from the University of the Agra University, New Delhi. As a Canadian Commonwealth Scholar, he obtained his MA in Economics and Sociology from the University of Toronto.

International Students

Our students come not only from Asia but also from across the globe. Our full-time and part-time students come from 60 different countries.

Our over 30,000 alumni represent 37 different nationalities, many of whom have become key movers in their industries. This international mix further reinforces AIM's experience of combining international exposure to enhance markets and expertise in Asian business.

Messages

WASHINGTON SYCIP CO-CHAIRMAN

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JOSE L. CUISIA, JR. CO-CHAIRMAN

A YEAR OF TRANSITION TOWARDS A TRANSFORMED FUTURE

ROBERTO F. DE OCAMPO PRESIDENT

2004-2005: A YEAR OF HISTORIC CHANGE FOR AIM

Department of the Interior and Local Government

MARCH IS FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

Bureau of Fire Protection

"Pamayanan Sama-Sama Laban sa Sunog"

Every year, hundreds of Filipinos die in home fires. Thousands more suffer injuries of varying degrees, plus the loss of property and valuables. If a fire occurs in your home, your chances of survival will depend on how you protect yourself and how quickly and safely you are able to get out. But more importantly, tips on how to prevent and contain fires occurring in our homes should be stressed.

OBSERVE AND FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE TIPS TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR HOME SAFE!

1) Put phone numbers of fire department and other emergency numbers near your phone.

2) Eliminate fire hazards through good housekeeping. Dispose of waste paper, rubbish, and other flammable materials regularly.

3) Keep matches out of children's reach.

4) Oil or put lamps and candles should be placed away from curtains. Do not put them where the wind, children or pets may topple them. Put out flame before going to bed.

5) Do not keep flammable materials like gasoline, alcohol, and paint inside the house.

6) Regularly check your electrical installations, and have all worn-out wirings and electrical fixtures changed or repaired by a licensed electrician.

7) Do not overload electrical circuits by putting additional lights and appliances.

8) Blown fuses should not be replaced with coins, wires, or substitutes.

9) Never leave a lit cigarette, cigar, pipe unattended. DO NOT SMOKE IN BED!

10) Always keep a First Aid kit handy.

11) Establish escape routes.

12) Use smoke detectors in your homes and ballistics to alert you in case of fire, especially at night when you are asleep.

13) Keep a fire extinguisher in your home and learn how to use it.

JOSELITO F. ANGMAD, CESO IV
Director, BFP
Chief, BFP

Regional bureaus and lahing ng mga nakilahok sa sunog sa mga kabahayan, kabilang ang mga pagkilala ng lahing ng mga ito at ng mga kapisanan sa Magdagdag ang mga ng kumalap ng mga pangangailangan ng mga sunog ng sunog, at tulong sa mga pangangailangan. Ang mga pagkilala ng mga sunog ng mga pangangailangan ng mga sunog ng mga pangangailangan.

Mga tao, huwag kayong magpapanic ang Fire Prevention Month, partikular tuwing mga sunog ng mga tulad sa pamamahay ang mga tulong kumalap ng pamilya sa mga mga kabahayan ang mga sunog ng mga pamilya. Ang mga pagkilala ng mga sunog ng mga pangangailangan ng mga sunog ng mga pamilya.

Bawat isa sa mga kabahayan sa kalye. Bawat kalye sa mga kabahayan. Ugaliin ang mga sunog ng mga kabahayan ang mga sunog ng mga kabahayan.

Inumpisahan ngayon ng 1 to 1 am. Ang mga 800 gallon Anos Firetruck ay mga 1 to 1 am. Ang mga 800 gallon Anos Firetruck ay mga 1 to 1 am. Ang mga 800 gallon Anos Firetruck ay mga 1 to 1 am.

Across the NATION

Bishop says he's ready to be arrested

By Yolanda Intole Fuertes,
Phil Northern Luzon Bureau
and Christian Esguerra
in Manila

DAGUPAN CITY—LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN ARCHbishop Oscar Cruz said he and three other Catholic bishops are in the government's "order of battle" and face arrest under President Macapagal-Arroyo's Proclamation No. 1017.

Cruz, in a telephone interview on Wednesday, said he received this information from a source whom he did not identify. He described the source as someone who is "close to Malacañang."

He also declined to name the three other bishops but said they are from Luzon and, like him, are known critics of the Arroyo administration.

Cruz, quoting his source, said the bishops would be charged with plotting to overthrow the administration.

He said he learned about the plan to arrest him on Monday and decided to inform reporters about it on the advice of his friends.

But he said he did not feel he was in danger nor was he advised to be careful.

"I have long been ready," the bishop said in jest.

Cruz, who presided Collonnet in last year's Senate investigation of the alleged bid of members of Mr. Arroyo's family to sell the illegal numbers game jueteng and election fraud, said he will not shake down and will willingly go with policemen.

In a separate statement, Cruz said it was a "big pity" that the administration "appears to be overreacting my little self, together with the three other bishops."

"[They're] going out to know [that] I do not, in any way, deserve [to arrest, jail and penalize me for sedition, treason or rebellion would be worthy entry in the Guinness Book of World Records," he said.

"Never! Ha! Please, I do not deserve it... yet," he said.

Cruz said the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines had said that there should be a unanimous search for truth on the current results of the 2004 elections. He said the CBCP released this position "far less than three times, from July 2005 to January 2006."

"This one only means that the moral legitimacy of the one holding the presidential office remains in doubt and therefore under question," he said.

He said his could be the reason Malacañang "seems so nervous, so afraid of truth, and appears to be out to more and more protect officials and minorities."

But other bishops said they doubted reports that would be arrested that little senior Church leaders in plots to overthrow Mr. Arroyo.

"I doubt that. Catholic priests are against any violent measure," Cebuano Bishop Jesus Varela Bilgera, a vocal critic of Mr. Arroyo, said yesterday.

Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles said there were probably four or five bishops openly advocating the resignation of Mr. Arroyo over a spread of alleging the 2004 election.

CARDINAL Ricardo Vidal in a huddle with Bishop Oscar Cruz and Archbishop Angel Lagdameo during the 33rd Hiyuriy Prayer Movement held at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City JOAN BONDOC

But Arguelles said he was concerned some of these were involved in any plot to unseat Mr. Arroyo.

"All bishops agreed that we are not supposed to engage in political matters unless moral principles are at stake," he said. "Bishops disagreed with all sides and wrote, contra con-

And Time article written by Bryan Welch, the plot supposedly included a group of Catholic bishops who would meet military men at the Edsa Shrine where a Mother Mary was to send a statement withdrawing support from the government.

"The bishops made one request: That the coup be bloodless," wrote Welch, whose article was based heavily on the reporting of Philippine correspondent Sibby Sinderson.

Besides Bilgera, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz and Bishops Antonio Tobias of Novaliches and Julio Xavier Labayen, prelate emeritus of Infanta, have been openly criticizing the moral direction of Mr. Arroyo's governance.

Bishop Bishop Arturo Villegas recently added a dissenting voice, criticizing the government for the way it decided to celebrate the 20th anniversary of People Power I.

A key figure in the first bloodless revolt as confidant of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, Villegas' newest publication of "saying" the spirit of Edsa 2 and ignoring it afterward, much like the way quick do.

In all the statements coming from the Church hierarchy, clergymen, consistent with Catholic teaching, have repeatedly rejected any form of violence as a way of resolving the political standoff.

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president, earlier sought to calm agitated pastors, asking "civil society to exercise prudence, sobriety, patience and vigilance."

DAR bares ₱5.3M in infra in Benguet

BAGUIO, BOLSIE: Solely from Benguet province can now expect lower transportation costs for their farm produce with the launching of a ₱53.2 million infrastructure project undertaken by the support services program of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

In a press statement, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Reynaldo Malabaki said the DAR-launched [illegible] package that includes a farm-to-market road, irrigation and post harvest facilities.

These were constructed under the World Bank-financed agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCDEC) to help farmers in the Bagong-Sinking Cattle Agrarian Reform Community (ARC-ARC) in rural Benguet.

The ₱19.1 million road connects the barangays of Ilocos, Bagong and Pinking.

The Ilocos-Bagong-Pinking road not only reduces travel time but also lowers the transportation cost of 6,424 residents.

Malabaki also led groundbreaking rites for the construction of a storage warehouse worth ₱520,000.

The warehouse is intended for beneficiaries of the Bagong Multi Purpose Cooperative, it has a storage capacity of 1,500 cavans of rice.

The president is also the recipient of ₱23.4 million worth of irrigation projects, covering 150 hectares.

Malabaki said the DAR will continue to help farmers in the countryside gain access to rural infrastructure and support services through the agrarian reform program.

The DAR also distributed Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs).

RP, US troops focus on war games amid coup

By Yasmin Dreijan
PhilStar Central Luzon Desk

FORT MAGSAYSAY, NUEVA ECIJA—In the Philippine Army's biggest ramp here, last week's coup plot and the heightening political tension in Metro Manila have cast gloom on the way of military life.

On Tuesday, Filipino troops trained side by side with their American counterparts, undisturbed by whatever was happening in the country's capital, some 130 km south of here.

"All clear! All good!" an officer from the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division of the US military asked.

"Good!" was the snappy reply of 1st Lt. Reynaldo Ibarra of the Army's 48th Infantry Battalion based in Bataan.

There, the Scout Rangers and members of special forces took their turns, mastering attack moves for urban counter-warfare.

Beside an old, abandoned building, modern bunch of Filipino soldiers, many of view from the marksmanship training unit, bulletproof dynamites with weapons not yet available in the inventory of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Focus

This was the first day of the urban terrain military operations training and 2nd Lt. Donald Dennis Lorenzo preferred to focus on it.

"We're not affected by the coup [reports]. We're excited with the training. You see, this is the first for our entire battalion," he said.

The battalion, coming from the Army's 10th Infantry Division, Camp Melchor de la Cruz in Gamu, Isabela, has been here since late last week.

"We came purely for the joint exercise," Lorenzo said, referring to the Balikatan 2006.

On the same day, hundreds more Filipino soldiers took part in Balikatan's recent offensive/defensive drills, another Shower course and live fire training in Fort Magsaysay.

Other war games were on as well, according to US Marine Capt. Darrell Byrnes.

At the Crow Valley in Capas, Tarlac, Philippine and US Air Force pilots simulated close air support combat.

At the airport in Clark, Pampanga, the Marines practiced air jumps, while in Subic, Cavite, sailors were ready to do night diving. Platoons at Sangley Point also in Cavite carried out a salvage project on an old ship.

For the 27-year-old Lorenzo, this was his first training and he would rather not be distracted.

"The techniques were easy to learn," he said.

Thirst for training

For Cpl. Michael Hagen, of the fort Magsaysay-based training and doctrine command, the joint war games came first and for Sorrows. The last exercise that he joined was a sniper-counter-sniper course in 2000.

He would rather leave the talking about destabilization to high-ar officials.

"**This is what I want to learn**, sir, ma'am," Hagen said.

Life at the main camp has a semblance of normalcy.

At the food hour gists, security personnel were on with the usual protocols. Jeeps burying civilian employees piled the routes unrestricted.

Brenda Carbonilla, who maintains a suki-suki store in the Light Reaction Battalion Compound, told soldiers there were about their normal tasks.

Mid. Gen. Javier Holgado, the division's commander, said he has resumed his schedules and started attending meetings outside the camp.

"**The situation has relaxed**," Holgado said.

This was not the case over the weekend when his troops had to restrain Scout Rangers from leaving their base at Camp Tecson in San Miguel, Bulacan, following a purported plan by their former commander, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, on mobilize them for anti-administration rallies.

Byrnes said Balikatan-related training took seven to 18 months to plan, and must go on as planned.

Like in basketball games, the Philippine and US troops have to practice together to respond better to crisis situations and antiterrorism operations, Byrnes said.

MUTATION
A Volkswagen Beetle mutates into a flower basket and sneakers during the annual Panagbenga, Baguio City's yearly festival featuring flowers.

Baguio, Cotabato raise funds for Guinsaugon

EFFORTS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR the victims of the landslide that buried the entire village of Guinsaugon in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte have reached as far north as Baguio City and as far south as Cotabato City.

In Baguio City, volunteers are using a dog to raise funds for the landslide victims.

The dog, "Jabbar II," a German shepherd, has so far raised P15,000 in donations at the Baguio Flower Festival's trade fair that was set up on Session Road.

Benjamin "Tommy" Ilao Pedro, its handler, offers to pose Jabbar II alongside donors for a photograph, and roughly 40 people have taken home their keepsakes, said Nanette Padilla, who initiated the project.

The first Jabbar used to stroll along downtown Session Road in the 1980s, and Baguio children almost always stopped to get a glimpse of the "wonder dog."

Padilla said donations have been slow because President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency displaced the Southern Leyte tragedy from the front pages of most newspapers.

In Cotabato City, hundreds of students of Central Mindanao's premier university cooped to the streets to raise funds for the landslide victims.

Chanting, "let us help our brothers and sisters in Leyte," the students and faculty members of the Church-run Notre Dame University (NDU) were joined schools, government and private offices, public students and bus terminals asking people to share any amount for the landslide victims.

"We hope to raise huge amount or goods for the victims," Fr. Eduardo Tamayo-and, OMI, university president, said. "We may not be able to raise that much but it would be a big help for our unfortunate kababayan in Leyte."

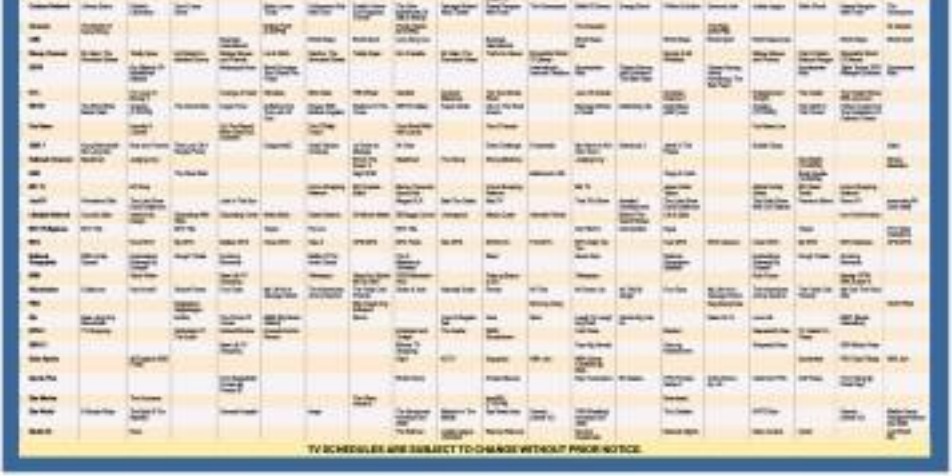
Students in their uniforms carry boxes and flag down public utility and private vehicles asking passengers to share any amount.

"It's heartening to see people sharing small amounts," Tamayo said.

Gilberto Sabilo, a jeepney driver who claimed he was from Leyte, shared part of his day's income, saying he was happy NDU initiated the fund drive.

Susan Silverio, a government employee, dropped money and shared her P50 bill, hoping it would help. "I hope this helps to whatever way," she said. Vincent Cabreza, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau.*

JABBAR II, the German shepherd that became a symbol of a fund raising drive for Guinsaugon landslide victims, poses for pictures with Baguio City visitors.



Woman raped for 2 days saved in Caloocan

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A 22-YEAR-OLD CHINESE-FILIPINO woman who was held hostage for two days by four men who allegedly raped her repeatedly and made her take drugs was rescued by policemen in Caloocan City on Tuesday.

Northern Police District Director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said city police started by SPO1 Enrique Tan to unwind news of the suspects – identified as Edgardo Legarda and Eduardo Bautista – at a house in 4th division.

Two other suspects, however, escaped. "A members upcloser is now being considered for the others about their only as Romeo and Roger," Bataoil said.

SPO1 Ma. Theresa Cruz, of the Caloocan city police women's desk, said the police were able rescue the victim after only thirty such city on her and examined her family about her whereabouts.

The victim told the police that a certain "Bench," who claimed he knew her family, had offered to help her find a job.

"Bench" introduced the victim to a certain Roger who took her to the Principal along McArthur Highway where he raped her, police said.

From the site, Roger took her to the house on 4th Avenue where Bench and two other men joined him, the victim narrated.

"In the house, the suspects alternately and repeatedly raped me, at the same time threatening to kill me if I were to escape or report them to the police," the victim said in her affidavit. She was also given drugs by the suspects, she added.

The police had reported that the victim seemed high on drugs when she was rescued.

Family row ends in tragedy

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A WOMAN ALLEGED SHOT to death by her 36-year-old American husband on Wednesday inside their two-story house in a posh subdivision in Cainta, Rizal.

But police learned of the alleged crime only yesterday morning after the woman reportedly tried to cover up what happened, police chief Supt. Gilbert Cruz told the business.

Not only did the suspect fail to report the incident, she also allegedly ordered her brother to clean up the room where the alleged crime happened, Cruz added.

Greg Boardsway died after he was shot more than six times. The police have already arrested his wife Catherine, 29. Cruz said the couple were heard yelling at each other at about 8 p.m. on Wednesday inside the two-story house off their house in 951 Sitio Bulaon, Barangay San Domingo.

"She admitted she confronted her husband because she was jealous," Cruz said, quoting Catherine. At the height of the confrontation, Catherine allegedly took out a 9 mm handgun and shot Greg, hitting him in different parts of the body.

Cruz said Catherine immediately thought of escaping, but her helper Helen advised her to bring her husband to the hospital.

Greg, however, died while en-route. A hospital watchman called the Cainta police to report his death.

MANDALUYONG'S FAIREST
Winners in the recently concluded Miss Mandaluyong 2006 beauty pageant smile for the camera (from left) Andrea Dimaano, 4th runner-up; Rencelle Robles, 1st runner-up; Raquel Dungca, Miss Mandaluyong 2006; Christina Marcaida, 2nd runner-up; and Jamela Kaha Rodrigo, 3rd runner-up. With them are Mandaluyong Mayor Neptali Gonzales II and his wife Queenie.

More Pasig cops to Subic

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THREE WEEKS AFTER THE DISCOVERY of a shabu market in Pasig City, policemen at the Eastern Police District (EPD) are still feeling the heat.

Fifty policemen from the Pasig City Police and the District Headquarters in Pasig City are scheduled for a month-long Values and Leadership Training at a Philippine National Police (PNP) facility in Subic, Zambales.

The group, which is scheduled to leave on Monday, is made up of the second batch of policemen from the EPD to undergo retraining following the discovery of a compound house reportedly used as drug den on July 30.

The compound is located several meters away from the Pasig City Hall and the EPD headquarters.

The first batch, scheduled to return to their mother units this week, was composed of at least 45 policemen.

But some policemen are complaining. Though willing to undergo retraining, they are asking why they were included in the second batch even if their units were not directly involved in anti-drug efforts.

The National Capital Region Police Office had relieved Pasig City Police chief Senior Supt. Raul Medina and EPD Director Chief Supt. Oscar Valenzuela, and also ordered the relieving of the police chief for failing to monitor the shabu store operations.

METRO BRIEFS

Store clerk killed

A STORE clerk in Taguig City was killed Wednesday night in what the police said was a case of robbery. Rolly Solis, 20, was shot in the head by unidentified suspects before the Jane Variety Store and Lechon Manok at Purok 1 in Barangay Upper Bicutan. Edward Lumpit, the victim's friend, told the police that he came to the store at around 7 p.m. to borrow Solis's cellphone. He was already at the back of the store where he found Solis bathed. The shot was also heard by Benjamin Langub. The building owner residing on second floor, who went down to check on Solis, said saw him lying bloodied on the floor. Senglaw Mobile, the investigator, told the police that the store's earnings for that night were missing. The suspects are at-large. In the possession of the victim. There is a possibility that robbery was the primary motive of the killing," said city police chief Supt. Ramon Figueroa in his report. Bullets in the victim's cellphone and P1,600 in cash were found at the same scene, along with an empty shell and a slightly dented plug of an unknown firearm, Reyes added.

Jordan R. Sy

Women's Month activities in Quezon City

A "YEAR of the city's women address" describing the condition of the fairer sex in Quezon City will kick off the month-long observance of National Women's Month this March. Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. will deliver the address on Monday, during the flag-raising ceremony at City Hall, where he will talk about the gains made by the city in protecting women against discrimination and abuse. Quezon City is also playing host to the national celebration of the 15th anniversary of the country's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw). Cedaw is the first and only international treaty recognizing and addressing women's rights. This year's celebration of National Women's Month is being led by the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women and the city's own Gender and Development Resource and Coordinating Office. With the theme "Cedaw: Ng Pagkilos Kababaihan ng Katuwiran," several activities have been lined up for the festivity. Among those on the list are free and painless regarding women, regional medical services, an exhibit and a trade fair. Quezon City is the first Metro Manila local government unit to adopt a "gender and development code" which institutionalizes women's rights and issues.

Ed Yap

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— Mayor Jennifer L. Alonzo
Manila City Mayor

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METRO
John Steve Q. Dipasupil

MMDA lists 10 'killer zones' in Metro

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FIVE AREAS ALONE COMMONwealth Avenue were among the top 10 "black spots" or the most accident-prone spots in Metro Manila last year, reinforcing the thoroughfare's reputation as Quezon City's "killer highway."

The city, on the other hand, recorded the most number of accidents with fatalities during the same period, accounting for 149 cases or 36 percent out of a total 416 incidents.

According to a report of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Road Safety Unit (RSU), 11 accidents which led to deaths happened last year on Commonwealth Avenue (or Don Mariano Marcos Avenue), more than any other road in the Metro.

"There are areas on the road that are wide, while some are constricted," MMDA Traffic Engineering Center chief Romeo Ong said, explaining why the major thoroughfare was prone to accidents.

"There are portions on the streets that are highly populated, including squatters' areas. It's a high-speed highway of irregular configuration with densely populated areas," he added.

In fact, based on the data compiled by the MMDA Metro Manila Accident Reporting and Analysis System (MMARAS), four of the top "black spots" last year are found on the area.

"Another factor is that people prefer to cross the road leaving oncoming traffic, rather than walk the few extra meters to the nearest overpass," Ong told the Inquirer, noting that overpasses can be found on Commonwealth's "black spots."

RSU data analyst Imera Coral supported Ong's observation, saying that most accidents were caused by inattentive pedestrians who crossed the roads despite high-speed traffic.

"If you observe the attitude of Filipinos, you would see that pedestrians usually ignore overpasses, and even destroy fences on the center islands just to get across. Add to that the number of vendors with goods for sale or vagrants who knock on car windows asking for alms," Coral said.

Ranked the top "black spot" was Espana-Lerma Avenue. There accidents with fatalities occurred in the area last year. Thirty-six other cases resulted in injuries and 330 caused damage to property. In second place was the area in front of St. Peter's Parish Church-where one fatal accident was recorded. A total of 27 accidents resulted in injuries while 86 others caused property damage. Ranked third was the avenue's intersection at Riverside, just several meters past St. Peter's, with two accidents that led to deaths, 20 that caused injuries and 43 others that left drivers unscathed.

In fourth place was the area in front of the Commission on Audit, a short distance away from Riverside, with two accidents resulting in deaths, 18 cases leading to injuries and 37 others causing property damage.

The other areas in the list were: C5 Road near the Epcoss in Barangay Bagong Ilog, Ortig, Ortis Road along Commonwealth Avenue, JP Rizal Street in front of Guadalupe Hills in Makati City, C5 Road in front of Market! Market! in Taguig City, and the corner of Katipunan Avenue and E Fuentos Boulevard in Quezon City. Two accidents which led to deaths were recorded in the areas.

In last place was the corner of Edsa and Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City where an accident which resulted in death was recorded.

The MMARAS data showed that the majority of the 316 accidents with fatalities that were reported happened in Quezon City, which has the most number of major roads in Metro Manila. Compared to its 149 accidents that resulted in deaths, Manila had 50, Mandaluyong had 27, followed by Caloocan with 20.

In a bid to curb Commonwealth Avenue into a safer thoroughfare for motorists, commuters, and pedestrians, the MMDA has begun a comprehensive rehabilitation program targeting the thoroughfare's busiest stretch—a two-kilometer strip that begins 400 m before Fort Gomez Mall up to 200 m past the Batasan Road intersection.

The project, set to be completed in time for the Christmas season, includes the installation of inner footbridges, directional and safety signs, and loading and unloading bays.

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Pasay council cracks down on lewd shows

By Jocelyn R. Uy

CLEAN UP YOUR ACT OR GET OUT OF TOWN.

The Pasay City Council has ordered pulsating discos, through a resolution, to strictly implement an ordinance that bans the staging of lewd or obscene shows in the city, and other activities "inimical to the welfare and morals of residents."

The city council ordered the constant crackdown after observing that "there are still many nightclubs, saunas, pagpaliguan or massage parlors or entertainment establishments operating in the city who violate the ordinance."

The ordinance defines lewd or obscene shows as the showing of performers' private parts, either to the nude or in "see through" and "wet look" attires.

Performers caught violating the law will be fined P2,000, or face imprisonment of not more than a year if they cannot pay the fine.

Club owners, on the other hand, face a fine of P5,000 and a one-year prison term.

The ordinance also allows the mayor to order the closure of the establishment and revoke its business permit.

If the violator is a foreigner, the mayor may order the deportation.

The resolution, sponsored by Councilor Arnel Arano, also directed city police chief Senior Supt. Romulo Fronda to provide the city council with a quarterly report on police raids against erring club owners and performers.

Fronda, however, said he has not yet received the council's directive.

"But it is a continuing effort on our part to curb the illegal activities and such activities in the city," he told the Inquirer.

He added that the police are keeping an eye on nightspots along the stretch of F.E. Barrios.

SPORTS

E-mail: pi_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyboy S. Malaseños

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Danes, Mustangs still unscathed

PCU Baby Dolphins set 3 marks in 206-47 massacre of Batangas cagers

LEGAZPI CITY — PLAYING TRIBUTE TO FORE, Angeles University Foundation and West Visayas College+ posted outstanding wins to top their respective groups yesterday in the fifth National Students Basketball Championship at the Albay Astrodome here.

But the Philippine Christian University Baby Dolphins took the spotlight by setting three scoring records in the inter-secondary championship in Date, Centurion Norte, with a 206-47 massacre of University of Batangas.

The Baby Dolphins became the first team ever to score more than 200 points in the history of the high school championship. PCU's 94 first-half points was also the biggest ever by a team since 1948, and so was its 159-point winning margin.

The ALP Danes broke away from a close match in the fourth quarter to down University of San Carlos, 86-80, and top Group B.

In Group A, the NPC Mustangs trounced Eastern Visayas State University, 92-69, to rule the [illegible] going into the last three days of the week-long tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

It was the fifth straight win in the ALP and NPC, which will meet the No. 2 teams in the semifinals to decide the finalist in this event held under the auspices of the Albay provincial government and Legazpi city government, and supported by Shellmgum Kudos, Alaska, Health Options, Summit Mineral Water, Kuatro Bebida and Accel.

USC, which dropped no. 3-1, will depose second spot in Group D against National Capital Region Athletic Association (University of Urdaneta).

University of Perpetual Help-Rizal, which won by default over Calayan Educational Foundation Institute (Region III) for a 3-1 card, likewise fights for the second spot in Group A against Our Lady of Lourdes College (Region V), which formed Davao another home team Aquinas University, 89-86.

Cris Ingal, one of the ALP veterans powered a decisive step with 1:34 remaining that gave the Danes an 83-74 spread. Jeriver Allan Ubiña and guard Raymund Go scored key baskets down the stretch to preserve the win.

Ubiña finished with 23 points while Monreal Guerrero and Go added 15 each.

Fred Mangahas led PCU, the former NCAA runner-up, with 28 points in the game held at the Ago Multi-Purpose Center. All 12 Baby Dolphins dribbled scored, several times in double digits.

The Manila-based squad held UB to only 22 points in the first half, 94-22, and made sure triples in the final half to post the most lopsided victory in the tournament.

Zamboanga City's Southern City Colleges occupied with a 92-83 win over local team Our Lady of Lourdes Foundation College for its second win in Group B of high school play.

Joining SCC at the top with a similar 2-0 record was Cabanatuan City's St. Clare Academy, which scraped past Cebu's Sullivan College of Technology and Institute of Technology, 87-86.

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FONACIER No. 1

Fonacier Rookie of the Year derby pacesetter

By Jane Manaora

FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, ANOTHER former Arwen Blue Eagle could real up as the Philippine Basketball Associ ation Rookie of the Year this season.

Setting cockpace for the last of Alaska teammate Rich Alvarez, Larry Fonacier of Red Bull has pulled away from the rest of the field in the race for the ROY award after the Bulls captured the Fi nals Conference crown recently.

Fonacier, selected 14th overall in the second round by the Bulls, has compiled a total of 1,325 points based on statistics, won-game and playoff bonuses. The 6-foot-2 marksman had 650 statistical points, 750 won-game and 325 playoff bonus points.

"When we got him in the draft, the plan was to break him in gently," said Red Bull coach Jong Uichico. "But he has proved himself. He has earned his minutes inside the court."

Because it took to stardom, however, wasn't easy. He suffered an ACL tear on his left knee two years ago while playing for the Eagles in the UAAP.

In the draft, teams passed up Fonacier before the Bulls gambled and snagged him in the second round.

"Everybody was amazed on Larry's recovery," said Asbury Sierra, Alaska's manager. "Luckily, he ended up with the right team which gave him a chance to prove himself."

Fonacier's great leap in the rookie race, Fonacier jumped to the top after 22 games, averaging 6.0 points, 3.1 rebounds and 1.0 assists per outing. Kashmir Chib overall for the conference MVP, Fonacier is the only rookie in the top 10 players of the conference.

Drafted third from No. 1 for the BOF mentor Ivan Ilas, Justin Brady's Illen Cahuguyan, who led all rookies in the eliminations but faded in the playoffs after his team finished seventh.

Cahuguyan now stands at sixth overall with 882 points. The Utsunji-based playmaker could still get a chair this at the second if the Bombers make a good account of themselves in the all-Filipino Conference beginning Sunday.

Curiously, a former University of the Isaac Wardon moved behind Fonacier in the freshman contest. Nino Canaleta of Air21 accumulated 975 points after the Express barged into the semifinals by the Bulls in the Invitational.

Red Bull's Lorenzo Naborda is running third with 930 points while Mike Hodges of Barangay Gardeo and Red Bull's Paolo Bugia are neck-and-neck with 926 and 868 points, respectively.

FONACIER No. 1

Bibat shoots 71 for slim Tour margin

LIM. CITY—WITH HIS LITTLE KNOWLEDGE of the course, Michael Bibat went for the greens and exit the pins yesterday.

The result was a one-under-par 71 that gave the mainstay of the gold medal-winning Southeast Asian Games Philippine team a one-shot lead in the opening round of the Samsung Interpost Golf Tour grand finale at the Summit Point Golf and Country Club in Lipa City.

Bibat finished with the lone red-par round among the five finishers who spent the weekend, banned day trying to get the feel of the course designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr. in anticipation of the tougher rounds ahead.

Close on the heels of Manila Southwoods mainstay Bibat was Roger Saraguna, the Canlubang veteran and national player who had a birdie, a bogey and 36 pars for a round of 72.

Young Rowen Acierto carded a 74, Jong Lagat made a 76 and Rowen Orduna struggled with a 77 in this event marking the culmination of a nationwide series sponsored by Samsung.

The five championship division finishers will try to position themselves for the final two rounds, where they will be joined by 20 other qualifiers playing in the 36-hole finals of various handicap divisions for men and ladies.

Bibat birdied two of the four par-5s, the fifth and the 14th, against a lone bogey on the par-3 eighth.

Acierto made just two birdies, one of them on the last hole, that were with three bogeys, while Lagat had four bogeys and a single birdie on the 14th.

Orduna had the most birdies with three but he stumbled with three double bogeys and three bogeys in the grand finale of the event backed by Philippine Airlines as the official carrier, Tokyo Tokyo, 929, Mizuno, Copperman Sport, Seiko, Rudy Project, Citizen Fiber and Epson Plus. Media partners are Point 69.1, Jam 88.3, 89.9, 99.5 DZ, 1485 AM, Lite and Hiller Bite.

Sportsplus Channel will air the highlights of the event at a date to be announced soon.

ONLY ONE LONDEN PAR: Michael Bibat shows five form.

NSAs to deal with Sol-Gen, not PSC, on advances

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THOSE ARE GOING TO GET EMBROILED IN the biggest national sports associations.

The latest warning came this time from the Office of the Solicitor General, which will now go after erring NSAs whose total unliquidated financial advances have already reached P86 million.

Sports commissioner Walter Garcia, who is in charge of NSA affairs, told the bigwigs that the OSG has taken over from the Philippine Sports Commission the function of approving NSAs' requests for funds.

The move, according to Garcia, is to help compel NSAs to share proof of their cash advances from the PSC, which dates as far back as 1992.

Of the 32 NSAs which drew cash advances from the PSC, only pencils slot, sailing and taekwondo were able to liquidate the advances, according to agency sources.

Cycling's P6 million total cash advance is the biggest in the unliquidated list, followed by archery and football with P5 million each. Athletics has a P1.6 million unaccounted load, also in the list of big spenders are kurashiki, chess and canoe and kayak.

"The lowest percent is OK with us," said Garcia. "It is the NSAs' obligations to give us receipts. We are not asking them to return the money but at least they must liquidate," he added.

Answering the second-term PSC commissioner said the agency is concerned now the delay the new process would create in disbursing funds to athletes preparing to compete or train abroad.

"Maybe we can do the old arrangement, which was to go directly to the athletes and have a coordinator go with them to handle the money," Garcia said.

The amount of unliquidated funds, according to Garcia, has been reduced to P28 million during the term of chair Butch Tuano. Then it grew again in the past years, Garcia added.

Meanwhile, the PSC commissioner has prompted the House of Representatives to suspend the PSC's budget hearing scheduled yesterday.

A 2006 budget of at least P394 million is being eyed by the PSC, the living an Asian Games year.

PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez was informed of the postponement Wednesday night.

"It's their (House) prerogative," Ramirez told the boys over.

The Department of Budget and Management had approved only a P28 million budget for the PSC this year. With additional reports from Manong R. Gamilo

Que, Miñoza join hot scoring in Jakarta tilt

PHYSICS 11

JAKARTA—DAVID HIGGINS, PHOTO Tee champ, Simon Dyson and Thomas Aiken shot similar six-under-par 66s Thursday to share the first round lead at the Indonesia Open golf tournament.

Thailand's Arthur Isaked are tied in third at the title lead with six birdies and an eagle before dragging a bogey on the 18th hole under cloudy skies at the 7,006-yard Jeravalda Golf and Country Club.

Irishman Higgins made seven birdies against a bogey, while Englishman Dyson carded six birdies and seven Pleiney, winner of last month's Malaysian Open, finished with eight birdies and two bogeys. Dyson of England backed up a first hole eagle with six birdies against two bogeys.

American Anthony Kang and Swede Steven Jeppesen joined Australians Andrew Buckle and Brad Kennedy a stroke back on 67.

Filipino Angelo Que and Frankie Miñoza joined the pac-tipping spree.

Que, the 2004 Caltex Masters champion, eagled the first and the 17th holes, both par-5s, but could only muster a 70. Que fired five 22nd place with 11-unders, also had three birdies but made four bogeys.

Miñoza had a one-birdie round in his 71. He was deadlocked for 36th place with 20 others. AP

TeleTech Unity Cup debutant

A MULTITITLED TEAM WILL SOON MOVE out, but a new squad is moving in.

As pre-hosted Wilcon Pizzas into action one last time in the PBL Unity Cup, TeleTech kicks off its maiden campaign on March 22.

The rookie-ling his debut as head coach for TeleTech is Jerry Codilera, the longtime star setter of Pembrada in the 1980s. The 6-foot-3 super has earned spiker holds in 2005.

"With Codilera's stature and legacy, we hope the team will be a winner, too," said consultant Edgardo Abalos.

Codilera attends the TeleTech team in bench of big names, but said his main focus is just to get the right players for each position. The AP team member also plans to beef up his crew with young talents from the Rookie draft, which will be held at 1 p.m. today.

Aurelio M. Reyes

Jungolf final leg this weekend

ALOTTO TO THE ASIA PACIFIC JUNIOR CHAMpionships will be up for grabs in the final leg of the Jungolf school season series of the Samsung Tour closed this weekend at the Sucobasa Golf Course and Golf and Country Club in Tanauan, Batangas.

Tee-off time is 9 a.m.

To be disputed in the 36-hole final leg of seven weekend qualifier are the seven regular Philippine teams slots for the Asia Pacific contest slated April 29 to May 2 at the Singapore Island Golf and Country Club in Singapore.

Leading the race for the four trips to Singapore are Glen Gabriel, Mike Ito, Marcel Pozon, Migz Dalusa and Malik Mabao in the boys' division and Bambee delos Ito, Cyra Rodriguez, Crystal Superal and Paulina Soto in the girls' category.

Glen E (7-0 overall) and Glen F (5 under) play will be held at the Riviera Golf and Country Club.

Wide-open All-Filipino race

CLEAN LIVING

Marcelo B. Mijgo

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT IN THIS YEAR'S All-Filipino Cup of the Philippine Basketball Association which gets going on Sunday at the Big Dome? The series will feature a game slated at a long hung on March 19 pitting Talk 'N' Text against Purefoods and serves out of town series aside from the usual matches at the Big Dome, Quezon Coliseum and Cuneta Astrodome.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala said he is very positive about the future, adding that they're trying very hard to further improve today's first step by bringing in TV games. Talk 'N' Text household names at present (unlike in the past when former baseball, Ramon Fernandez, Atoy Co and other Sportsmanic were playing), will managed to pull through with flying colors in the just-ended Sun Alig Coffee Mania Conference went by including Red Bull.

Determined with revitalized confidence, spur and enthusiasm, Eala, together with a supportive board headed by chair Ely Caparas of San Miguel Corp., is keen on regaining the glory days of old. There key to success? The intense competition among the teams, the five-point personal attendance figure and the new format which limits the number of no-hearing games and rewards the achievements of teams.

For this season's All-Filipino conference, Procter & Gamble's Head & Shoulders has been tapped as the official sponsor of the Philippine Sportswriters Association chairs' Tuesday at the Fortune Restaurant in Manila, immediately after the ice-cutting ceremonies. Carlos appointed Teddy Atienza, Metrobank of the Philippine Daily Inquirer as vice-president, Pilar Bernard of Tempo as secretary, Aldrin Cardenas of The Daily Tribune as treasurer and Jun Lomibao of Business Mirror as auditor. Cardenas was tapped to replace Jun Antonio who resigned from the post. Antonio, however, will remain as treasurer in one of PSA presidents. Making up the PSA's board of directors are Dhg Marcelo, Lito Tarrayo, Fleida Toledo, Ed Sherwin, Jerry Galla, Dennis Rigos, Gino Mario Gonzales, Ira Cabanban, Ira Arellano, Tito Delfino, Ernesto S. Gonzalez, Ronnie Nathanielsz, Joaquin Henson, Marichi Maga and Enrique Soriano. Former PSA president Augusto Villanueva was tapped as an honorary member.

Although Purefoods lost power forward Jondan Salvador to injury and returned Homer Dela to MIA in an aborted trade, coach Ryan Gregorio said they are still looking forward to the next tourney. "We came in short for the Fiesta Conference, but we will do better this time."

Talk 'N' Text, which finished third in the last conference, the team's best result since joining the PBA in 2002, has obtained hard-nosed Mark Telan from TNT for John Prieto. And coach Bo Perasol said Telan's rushing ego for the team for us."

Elsewhere will be fielding the same lineup while San Miguel will be beefed up by former Ateneo player and ASEE guard Wesley Gonzales and Brandon Cabbay who are acquired from Alaska in exchange for Nic Belasco. Still, the line has taken the more drastic measure by sending Derrick Pumaren as new coach to replace Joel Banal. Aside from trading Telan and acquiring Arnold, the Phone Pals have bolstered up its veteran Bob Jones.

Pressure, undoubt, team consistent, and he would be relying not only on offense but on defense as well. "Offense is not a problem," he said. "But we need to improve on defense." Alaska remains a dangerous team over. The Ace will be bannered by old and new players who will be assisting Tim Cone's famous Triangle Offense.

SPORTSWATCH

SLO-PITCH FEVER. Members of the Caloocan Godfather squad, led by playing/team owner Jose Ahmet Lladller (right), during batting practice in preparation for their game in the 12th PANGLAO Cup, one of Asia's most prestigious co-ed slo-pitch softball competitions, which fired off yesterday at the Alabang Country Club. The team is gunning for its third straight title.

Elite Basketball Camp listing ongoing

SAN BEDA COLLEGE ALABANG and DYNAMIC GROUND FOR THE encyclopedia of the International Basketball Academy's (IBA) Elite Basketball Camp. The school is IBA's top invitation and all-inquiries joint program for Metro Manila's best high school basketball prospects. Top IBA and PBA coaches/players like David Wood, Eric Altamirano and Alex Compton will serve as teachers. The "stay-in" camp will run for six days at the Beda campus grounds in Muntinlupa, Laguna, from April 1-13. Registrations will be on March 11 at 1 p.m. for the third-year high school entrants and on March 12, also at 1 p.m., for seniors. Registration for the tyro's begins at P2,500 a.m. Deadline of submission for walk-in applicants is on Monday at 5 p.m. For inquiries, call 851-1100 or 8851-7600/820.

60 fights up in Pasay cockfest today

THE OPENING DAY OF THE PCCA-COCKFIGHTING SERIES IS SET AT 9 P.M. today at the Pasay City Cockpit with Sagupan Tambacan 2006 as sponsor. At least 60 cockers are expected to participate in the event in the Rosal Tournament. 100 fights were held in the "cockpit-by-Pasay" 3-cock derby won by the Novaliches entry 3-0 Friday (Sampilan 1-in inquiries, call 841-9081/843-1146 or 810-1110).

Four-cocker at SJC waives entry fee

SAN JUAN COLISEUM INC. WILL WAIVE THE ENTRY FEE IN ITS 4-COCK derby with a prize pool of P1.2 million on March 12, 14, 15 and 20, and with Sagupan Tambacan P800 as sponsor. Popular promoter Mike Badoy, with the backing of the SJC management, is host of the fourth-to-small-time cockers. Participants in the with more than seven fee entries in the 2-cock eliminations on March 12, 14 and 15 will receive P10,000 each. For more info, call 361-4250/361-3700/810-1110 or 724-0000.

Canlor reelected PSA president

JERRY A. CANLOR, SPORTS EDITOR OF MALAYA, WAS RE-ELECTED UNOPposed as president of the Philippine Sportswriters Association chairs' Tuesday at the Fortune Restaurant in Manila, immediately after the ice-cutting ceremonies. Canlor appointed Teddy Atienza, Metrobank of the Philippine Daily Inquirer as vice-president, Pilar Bernard of Tempo as secretary, Aldrin Cardenas of The Daily Tribune as treasurer and Jun Lomibao of Business Mirror as auditor. Cardenas was tapped to replace Jun Antonio who resigned from the post. Antonio, however, will remain as treasurer in one of PSA presidents. Making up the PSA's board of directors are Dhg Marcelo, Lito Tarrayo, Fleida Toledo, Ed Sherwin, Jerry Galla, Dennis Rigos, Gino Mario Gonzales, Ira Cabanban, Ira Arellano, Tito Delfino, Ernesto S. Gonzalez, Ronnie Nathanielsz, Joaquin Henson, Marichi Maga and Enrique Soriano. Former PSA president Augusto Villanueva was tapped as an honorary member.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICES

Race 1—(2nd Trip—Secretariat Division (2), Jose Leonardo Cruz Mar (6), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 2—(2nd Trip—Glenn Rivera (5), Jesse Mingle (3), Mario Sotto (1), Ronnie Usman (4), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 3—(2nd Trip—Golden Horse (3), Cesar Lucero (4), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 4—(2nd Trip—Spare Me (8), R. Leon Sabino (4), Antonio Gallego (3), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 5—(2nd Trip—Bulong, Mariveles Cruz Jr. (2), Rommel Lagasca (3), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 6—(2nd Trip—Dragon Wind (5), Jesse Mingle (3), Mario Sotto (1), Ronnie Usman (4), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 7—(2nd Trip—Dragon Wind (5), Jesse Mingle (3), Mario Sotto (1), Ronnie Usman (4), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 8—(2nd Trip—Dragon Wind (5), Jesse Mingle (3), Mario Sotto (1), Ronnie Usman (4), Jesse Mingle (3)
Race 9—(2nd Trip—Dragon Wind (5), Jesse Mingle (3), Mario Sotto (1), Ronnie Usman (4), Jesse Mingle (3)

Aquathlon, triathlon get going Sunday

THE NATIONAL AQUATHLON SERIES WILL BE launched this Sunday starting with the Speedo-Stimex Aquathlon at the Ayonan campus grounds.

Slated at 6:30 a.m., the event organized by the Loyola Meralco Sports will consist of a 1.2K run-14 meters-2.5K run in the grade school swimming pool.

Swimwear sports apparel company Speedo has signed to back this start aquathlon series along with the National Age Group Triathlon Series of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines.

"We have always looked at our partnership with triathlon on a long-term basis and we believe the sport continues to grow in terms of number of events and participants every year," said Speedo PAP Rhonda Madiana. "We will always be ready to lend a hand to triathlon, including supporting the national triathlon team."

"We expected close to a hundred runners, swim enthusiasts, mountaineers, triathletes, and members of the Ayonan community, including the school's swimming team to be part of this event," said event organizer Fabian Mangahas, who can be reached at 0919-6299196. "Part of the proceeds will benefit the Damagats of Cubao. Join us they are beneficiaries of our group."

The second leg of the Speedo Aquathlon Series is tentatively set in Palaui Island in Cagayan North in April.

Meanwhile, the 2006 Speedo-National Age Group Triathlon Series, TRAPS grassroots development program, will have its inaugural race on March 12 in Ormoc City starting and ending at the Ormoc Justice Hall Grandstand.

Organized by Yic Sui with the support of the Triathlon Association of Ormoc (TriaO), this 1.5K swim-30K bike-7K run distance race is again expected to attract triathletes from all over the Visayas.

TRAP president Tom Carmona will be in Ormoc for the race and the induction of the most-talented Triaol athletes led by president Alonzo del Sun and vice president Ernesto Reyes. TRAP will also be donating a spin cruiser to Triaol to the overall the Ormoc athlete at least 80 minutes, including relay team participants. Contact persons for the Ormoc race are Jay at 0921-2224595 and Hermie or Toni, 09 18 5677871.

Other NAST races on the near include events in Davao City in Cebu, Alabang, Bacolod and Clearwater Beach Club.

PACERS' David Hawthorn hangs on to the rim after dunking the ball against the Wizards. AFP/FILE

Kings too strong for fading Cavs

NEW YORK—KENNY THOMAS AND Mike Bibby were on hand to lead the Sacramento Kings in a 97-90 victory over the fading Cleveland Cavaliers on Wednesday.

Thomas scored 22 points and grabbed 14 rebounds, Bibby added 16 points and 12 assists as seven Kings players registered double-digit scores. Brad Miller with 13 points while Ron Artest, Shareef Abdur-Rahim, Francisco Garcia and Kevin Martin had 11 each.

LeBron James, Ronald Murray and Zydrunas Ilgauskas tallied 19 points each in the Blue's straight loss for the Cavaliers.

Artest provoked James with plenty of headaches, holding the Cave star to well below his 30-point per game average.

"Ronnie (Artest) did a hell," the Kings announced Cleveland 33-26 in the third quarter to take control of the contest.

The Cavaliers battled back to the fourth and were down by two 90-88, but the Kings answered with a big three pointer from Bibby and jumper from Miller to blast the comeback with less than a minute remaining on the clock.

In Denver, Kenyon Martin pivoted in 20 points and pulled down 12 rebounds to guide the Nuggets to a 96-87 win over the league leading Detroit Pistons at the Pepsi Center.

Carmelo Anthony contributed 21 points, seven rebounds and six assists in the Denver cause while Marcus Camby had 12 points and 20 rebounds for the Nuggets, winners of three of their last four games.

Chauncey Billups had 27 points and eight assists to lead the Pistons who had their six game win streak snapped.

In Memphis, Jim Good nailed a game winning jumper with 2.7 seconds to lifting the Grizzlies to a 104-99 decision over the New York Knicks, 104-99.

Good finished the night with 23 points while Chucky Atkins added 21.

Stephen Jackson had 25 points and 13 assists to pace the woeful Knicks, who have lost 21 of their last 23 games. Reuters

SOLAR SPORTS will air the Cleveland-Chicago tussle at 6 a.m. today with a 4 p.m.

RP's Amit gains q'finals of Women's 9-Ball meet

FILIPINO BUBBLES AMIT PLAYS BETTER with her back against the wall.

On the brink of elimination after dropping her first two matches, the 2005 Southeast Asian Games Double gold medalist won her last three games Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals of the 2006 WPA Antonio Peñalosa World 9-Ball Championship at the Taipei Dazhan in Taiwan.

The 29-year-old Amit nudged to Oh Lin, 7-5, and Jasmin Ouschan, U.S. on Wednesday, but stayed alive by subduing L. Phuvez 9-3, and L. Hornbaugh, U.S. respectively.

Amit, a fun miser in the high-level $70,000 tournament, then completed her amazing comeback by routing G.M. Liu, 9-3, in her 9th and final Group E match of the evening session.

Another Filipino, Athena Ibe, failed to advance after losing to fellow JP Dream of Malaysia, 7-4, Shu-Ling Liy of Chinese-Taipei, 7-6, and Noochi Maruno of Japan, 7-2, respectively.

Meanwhile, defending champion Alex Pagulayan of South Korea joins other consecutive time new Melisa Rowdow (5-3), Hyubina Dimaculangan (5-3), and Kiu Lai (5-4) to take charge in Group A of the event that offers $20,000 to the champion. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

German sends Agassi packing

AGASSI: I allowed him to use his legs.

VILORIA pays a courtesy call to President Arroyo Wednesday.

World champ leads Larrazabal cycling bets

WORLD BIKE TRIALS WORLD champion Hans "Flu Why" Rey will lead more than 30 local and foreign cyclists participating in the 5th Tirey Larrazabal Bike Invitational set in Ormoc City, Leyte, from March 30 to April 2.

This was announced by lawyer and cycling enthusiast Dequito "Gene" Larrazabal, organizer of the event honoring the memory of the late Ormoc City Mayor Demetrio Larrazabal Sr.

Aside from local cyclists belonging to 50 clubs, the event has also attracted individuals and teams from Cebu and the United States.

To be contested are the mountain bike cross country and downhill race, BMX race and freestyle events, and the poker event, the three-day four-ok Leyte.

Rey has granted assistance in developing the international bike trials scene and his second-to-the-world biking exploits which have been featured in the National Geographic and other magazines. He has pedaled in places such as the rocky snow-capped mountains of Peru, the deserts of Mexico and the jungles of Borneo to name a few.

Larrazabal said they expect most local and foreign spectators as the Department of Tourism has included the event in the Visit Philippines 2006 tourism calendar.

Slated for weekend and overnight bikers are the night ride around Ormoc City and a bus ride around Lake Danao. Other attractions of the event, being backed by Bally Project, Power Bar and Bikepoint Philippines, are a flyweight display, bazaars and street parties.

Bike shops will be setting up booths in the main staging area of the festival and will offer equipment and services as well as free coaching and bike adjustments from professionals. Participants to the bike festival will also be contending for the bike and Queen of the festival. For details, visit www.rayleyteabikefestival.com.

Viloria sees Arce tiff as Fight of the Year

IF HIS FIGHT AGAINST MEXICAN Jorge Arce pushes through, Filipino-American Rhon "Hawaiian Punch" Viloria predicts it's going to be named the fight of the year.

"I believe this will be one of the fight of the year contenders aside from the Bermudez versus Morales part II," said Viloria, the WBO Strawweight champion, during a press conference held by Solar Sports at the Oakwood Hotel in Greenbelt, Makati City.

Viloria arrived in the country Tuesday from the United States, where he defended his crown via a 12-round unanimous decision over Rhonalyn Jose Antonio Aquino, only the third time that Viloria went the distance.

"I (Aquino fight) made me realize that I can't ride them all by knockout," said Viloria, who's undefeated after 19 fights, including 12 knockouts.

Viloria appeared in the presscon, attended by Solar Sports chief operating officer Jose Cuneding, with a bandaged right hand due to a fight fracture he sustained against Aquino. "It will take me to three weeks to heal," said Viloria.

Other issues being considered are Viloria's next opponent is compulsion and mandatory challenger Juanito Rubillar and Aquino.

Flash Elorde Memorial Awards set March 25

FILIPINO BOXERS WHOSE EXploits on the international scene have made headlines in the past year will be honored in the Banquet of Champions during the sixth annual Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Memorial Awards on March 25 at the Dusit Nikko Hotel in Makati.

Johnny Elorde Management Incorporated and the Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Foundation is presenting the awards for the sixth straight year in memory of Flash Elorde, one of many Filipinos elevated to the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

"This is a night of celebration for the country's finest boxers," said Lauro Elorde, wife of the Flash. "The Elorde family is again presenting the boxing awards to recognize the outstanding achievements of Filipino boxers as well as promoters, trainers and others who have contributed to the promotion of the sport."

Professional boxing dominated the sports headlines last year with the international campaigns of Manny Pacquiao, Brian Viloria and Rhonalyn "Bonita" Bautista.

"Through the Elorde Memorial Awards, we hope to inspire other boxers to work even harder to bring honor and glory to their country," said Johnny Elorde, a boxing promoter and one of the sons of the Flash who is overseeing the event.

The season's biggest accolade for Philippine professional boxing will coincide with the 71st birthday anniversary of Flash Elorde, whose name is synonymous with great Filipino boxers and one of the greatest lightweight champions made into the greatest Filipino boxer of all time.

The honor roll will include Philippine champions of 2005, former world champions, boxy personnel, managers, trainers, referees and judge, matchmaker, most promising boxer, with special awards for the best fight of the year as well as parents and special boxing friends.

Some sponsors are Pepsi, PCSO, Handy Hardware Alcohol, Smart, Sen-Miguel, Cass Beltran Travel, Johnson and Johnson, Bal and Mig Bery Boxer and Elorde Sports Center.

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Lucena Milo run slated Sunday

THE 10TH NATIONAL MILO MARATHON returns in elimination runs this Sunday at the West Oval in Lucena City.

More than 2,000 runners are expected to convert the starting gun to be fired by Lucena City Mayor Ramon "C" Talaga Jr. at 6:30 a.m.

Quezon Gov. Wilfredo L. Enverga will also be at hand during the morning ceremonies.

Organized by the Lucena Shakers headed by Lou Tiburcio, the race is supported by the provincial and city governments, the city sports council after headed by Gerad Talaga, the police, Medallion City Health Office headed by Dr. Wilfredo Bondoc, Jr., and the different barangays covered by the 22 km route.

Lucena City police chief Senior Supt. Rodion C. Bruder said that Shoe Inn and Tiquion stores will be closed to celebrate traffic.

Milo Sports Events executive Pit Gocong said the top 15 winners in the 21K and 10K races during the first five legs of the 2006 season are no longer qualified to join Sunday's event.

Aguilar, Jao Golden Wheel top awardees

HONOREES Lee Gwen Aguilar (left) interviewed photos, John Jao then-talented boxers.

UCC derby kick-off set

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DPC YELLOW PAGES

18 RP films invited abroad

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

TWO'S 18 films and counting. Jeffrey Jeturian's "Minsan Isi" was handpicked by associate programmer Christian Belmiches for the Spring edition of the 9th Cinemalaya International Film Festival, which runs from March 31 to April 6. Grant Monteiro's "Moonlight in India" was honored to the film fest's Full Bloom last year.

Life Pictures' "Nag-Paglalaho si Maximo Oliveros" and Ian Gamazon and Neill de la Llana's "Cardo" were shown to be part of the 35th New Directors/New Films program presented by the Department of Film and Media at the Museum of Modern Art and the Film Society of Lincoln Center in New York, from March 22 to April 2.

"Screening to [illegible] directors' Richard Peña [of Puerto Rico], the last Pinoy films screened at the prestigious event were Lino Brocka's "Maynila, Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag" in 1975 and editor Khavn[illegible]'s "Inuk Yi" by Mike de Leon in the early 1980s," said culture and arts officer Vicky E. Feliciano of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

"Maskara," Special Jury Prize winner in last year's Cinemalaya, opens the festival with Ryan Fleck's "Half Nelson," starring Ryan Gosling of "The Notebook" fame.

For cultural information in "Only in Hollywood" A3-4

Glen Ongkeko-Marfil's "Mga Prosang Cute" is bound for the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Festival in June. "It's one of the oldest and biggest in the world," said Marfil.

Dante Mendoza's "Masahista," exhibited at the Rotterdam Film Festival with Lawliet Guillen's "Sanes Sumisi" last month, will be in the Melbourne Gay and Lesbian Film Festival this month and the Miami Gay and Lesbian Festival next month. It will also compete in Turin, Italy, in April and will be shown in Jeonjoo, Korea, in June.

Lav Diaz's "Ebolusyon ng isang Pamilyang Pilipino" and Jes M. Sanidad's "Sa Ating Paglalakbay Huda to Kamalakan" are in the hemestway ("wave-gazer") program of the Mar del Plata International Film Festival, set

(SEE PAGE A12)

Rat Pack impressionists in Manila

THE RAT PACK—JIMMIE SEMERA, Jesse Manio and Gemmy Davis Jr.—impersonate (from left) Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra, respectively, in "The Rat Pack [Direct From Las Vegas]" show on March 10 at the Araneta Coliseum.

It will be a night of nostalgia, with the group performing such well-loved tunes as Sinatra's "Come Fly With Me," "New York, New York," "The Way You Look Tonight," "My Way"; Davis' "What Kind of Fool Am I," "For Once in My Life," "The Candy Man"; and Martin's "Dad's Season," "Ain't That A Kick In Your Head," "Volare," "Everybody Loves Somebody."

Call 374-2222 or 374-9999.

Brasil 2006

"Sergio Mendes & Brasil 2006: A Celebration of His Timeless Hits" is set at the Araneta Coliseum on March 15. Here's how to win free tickets in the raffle and discounts on dinner:

Every P1,000 single or accumulated receipts from any Araneta Center Bus Terminal, Value Station and Bonanza Market entitles the customer to one raffle coupon—for two lower box tickets, plus dinner for two at Chefs, Mendocino Café and Delicatessen Gateway Mall.

Present receipt at the redemption booth located at Gateway Mall Concierge Level 1, SM Mall Upper Ground Floor, or Farmers Plaza Lower Ground Plaza.

To buy tickets, call 911-5555.

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Strada 78 at Mesh's

Tomorrow

Presently and Escape at Negra Café

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Amadeus at Mesh's

March 6

Tribe of Levi at Tavern on the Square

Raven and Eugene at Mesh's

March 7

ARTMP and String of Soul at Tavern on the Square

Eight Nine at BJ Guitar Bar

Aretha and Soulciel Out at Mesh's

March 8

Wishes at Tavern on the Square

Nine Observatory Station

Monochrush at BJ Guitar Bar

Jacqui Magno at Mesh's

March 9

Mocha at Tavern on the Square

Sundown on Negra Café

Monochrush at BJ Guitar Bar

Amanda Jess at Mesh's

March 10

Bosney Street at Tavern on the Square

Margaux and Presence at Negra Café

Dope Stoners at Arabia, Greenhills, Ortig

BJ and Friends with Members at BJ Guitar Bar

Aretha and Soulciel Out at Mesh's

KIRSH FLYNN performs in "Broadway!"

GERGIO Mendes

'Bedazzled 5' at Club Mwah

CLUB MWAH AT 552 BONI AVENUE, Mandaluyong City presents another Las Vegas and Broadway-inspired extravaganza, "Bedazzled 5."

The production numbers are bigger and more colorful, the pacing is faster, the change of sets more seamless than in the show's previous four editions.

Mwah-nia's "Who's That Girl," with beautifully groomed and masked performers, segues to a spoof of Mariah's "I Still Believe," from "Miss Saigon."

Other full production numbers include "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend," "I Gotta Dog Named Sea," "My Heart Will Go On," "Waiting for Tonight," "Saints Alive," a Queen Revival medley, an Aretha Franklin segment and "Phantom of the Opera."

Club Mwah is open at 8:30 p.m. and show time is at 10. Call 535-7943 or 532-2826.

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Veritable world of film exists beyond commercial circuit

FILM BUFFS WHO WATCH NEW MOVIES in the Philippines are generally limited to viewing American productions showing on the mainstream cinema circuit. As a result, they are severely restricted to commercial films that are big on production values but paranoid when it comes to originality and substance.

As a result, they don't know what the rest of the filmmaking world is producing. This disparity here of the richness and vision of international cinemas, and limits their growth as appreciators of the gifts of film.

Some local film buffs try to make up for the slack by attending the screenings of movies from different countries, sponsored by their respective embassies. But these semi-festivals are held only occasionally, so the rest of the time, movie lovers have to content themselves with viewing US films.

More creative viewers organize film clubs or watch movies on tape or on disc. Plus, if and when they can, they attend film festivals abroad, where the richness, diversity and originality of the film world is on full view.

At the recently concluded Bangkok International Film Festival, for instance, viewers from all over Asia were given their choice of new and classic films from more than 50 countries, tackling topics seldom dealt with in more commercial movies.

From France, "Kutty in the Shadows" reveals the plight of resistance fighters in the Second World War.

From Italy, "The Consequences of Love" invades the psyche of human behavior, searching for what it hides.

From Brazil, "House of Sand" shows how three generations of women chase their turbulent destinies, feelings and dreams of escape.

From Turkey, "Istanbul Tales" unspools in five chapters by different directors, each a reverence to a classic fairy tale.

From New Zealand, "River Queen" focuses on a romance who finds herself caught on both sides of the wars between Maori tribes and the British colonial army in the 1860s.

From South Korea, "Sympathy for Lady Vengeance" dramatizes the tragic story of a beautiful woman who is charged with the abduction and murder of a six-year-old boy.

From South Africa, "Tsotsi" is about a hoodlum on the loose who steals a car, unaware that a baby is in the backseat.

From India, "Water" is about a child bride who becomes a widow and is scorned, but learns to assert her rights and dignity.

From Vietnam, "Bride of Silence," on an unmarried woman is discovered to be pregnant, and is ostracized when she refuses to reveal her lover's name.

From Cambodia, "The Burnt Theater" is about performing artists who try to revive an old movie theater, but encounter strife instead.

From Indonesia, "Ini" is the film biz of a courageous political activist in the '30s.

From Malaysia, "Sepatu and Lipstick" is about a female football team that overcomes prejudice and ridicule.

Topics such as these, values dramatized on the screen moves, help expand viewers' consciousness of and appreciation for the world they live in, as opposed to the narrow confines of commercial filmmaking in the United States.

TOPNOTCH WRITER, TOO Aaron Sorkin—we remember him in "The Birdcage" and now we see him on Hallmark's TV's "Judging Amy"— is nominated for an Oscar for his "Capote" screenplay, adapted from Truman Capote's nonfiction novel "In Cold Blood."

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6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
7 BASAAN SI FRANCIS?
8 ASON FLEX
9 CLOSE TO YOU

ERMITA

1 FEARLESS
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
6 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA / BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
7 BASAAN SI FRANCIS?

METRO EAST

1 CLOSE TO YOU
2 FEARLESS
3 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 MURDER
6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
7 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
8 BASAAN SI FRANCIS?

NOVALICHES

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 FEARLESS
5 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2

CITISQUARE MALABON — PIONEER

1 BLOODRAYNE
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
1 FEARLESS
2 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

STA. ROSA — LIPA

1 SYRIANA
2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 NEW WORLD
5 FEARLESS
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

DASMARIÑAS — ANGELES

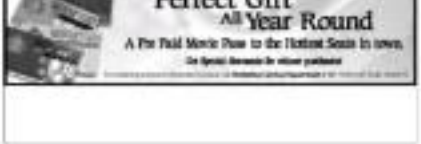
1 FEARLESS
2 WALK THE LINE
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 MURDER
5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
1 NEW WORLD
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 FEARLESS

IMUS — STARMILLS

1 CLOSE TO YOU
2 MURDER
3 FEARLESS
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
1 LITTLE MANHATTAN
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 BLOODRAYNE
5 FEARLESS
6 ASON FLEX

BACOLOD — ILOILO

1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 FIREWALL
3 MUNICH
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
5 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
1 AEON FLEX
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
4 FIREWALL
5 WALK THE LINE
6 BLOODRAYNE



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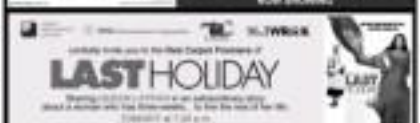

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FINAL DESTINATION 3
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CLOSE TO YOU
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
FOREWALL
MEMOIRS OF GEISHA
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BLOODRAYNE
WALK THE LINE
MEMOIRS OF GEISHA

FEARLESS
CLOSE TO YOU
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
MUNICH

EVENT CALENDAR — EVENT CALENDAR

A2

As Julia

NEW YORK—(DEFEATED) ...

a plans Broadway debut, 'Maximo' opens NY filmfest

makers who were invited in the first were the late great Lino Brocka and Mike de Leon.

"Maximo" is scheduled to be shown at the Museum of Modern Art on Wednesday, March 22, 9 p.m. and at the Walter Reade Theater on Thursday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 25 at 1 p.m.

"Lavilar," on the other hand, will be screened at the Museum of Modern Art on Friday, March 24 at 6:30 p.m. and at the Walter Reade Theater on Sunday, March 26 at 3 p.m. Ticket information is available online at www.filmlinc.com.

Moreno shared this quote from Scorsese about "Maximo": "It's happy and excited that the film is bringing tremendous pride not just to us, the filmmakers but also to the entire Filipino and Filipino-American community. It's a tremendous feeling to bring honor to one's country, and I can't thank the Cinemalaya organizers, and everyone behind it, enough for getting this film started and completed. It's been a long road but it's well worth it."

As for "Lavilar," United pessimist producer Tony Gloria ("American Adobo," "Imelda") said, in a press statement: "'Lavilar' is a film we've been tracking in acquisitions since its Sundance 2005 premiere as the Australian festival. Its filmmakers represent the kind of talent that we're always looking for—a fresh approach to storytelling, and an imagination not limited by budget or resources. The fact that they shot it digitally does not make their vision or storytelling any less than if they had shot it on film. That's why I'm proud of their work. I'm looking forward to its success not just in the Philippines, but internationally."

As we have previously reported, both Variety and Hollywood Reporter have given "Lavilar" favorable reviews. The Los Angeles Times praised it for being "a thriller that's fresh and compelling to the end." The LA Daily News declared that it is "a breathless, popular thriller" while the Village Voice hailed it as "brilliantly resourceful."

"Lavilar" will be released in the United States by Truly Indie Films while United Pictures has bagged the Philippines and worldwide rights (excluding North America).

A leaner Jim 2006 will love heavier year for Filipino and Filipino films in the US. Aside from "Lavilar" and "Maximo Oliveros," three new movies are also scheduled to have a theatrical release in the States. Brian Madrazo's "How Jun Sing" (Drama) and Jason Abundiente's "Mandatory" (Future Tint Entertainment).

(E-mail the columnist at wmpadre_1888@yahoo.com.)

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben U Angeles

NEW YORK-BASED Filipino filmmakers and artists recently feted Raymund Lee, producer of the multi-awarded "Ang Pagdadalaga ni [The Blossoming of] Maximo Oliveros," featured, from left: Oriel Carolino, Raymund Lee, Michael Bacol, Mayen Tanner, Eric Vin Carling Evangelista and Tet Manaloto. Standing, from left: Vincent Nebrida, Ora Pallarme, Lambert Parung, Bvi Santos and John Paul Su.

POSTBOT — BY BILL AMEND

A LITPA — BY JESS ABRERA

MARVIN — BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY — BY PAL JUNIOR

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

HUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBOY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANALIGAN

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES CRAKE

THIS WEEK FROM: this week hasn't been the most busy, which means you're always well prepared for whatever comes this. Your time, attention and generosity are well. Of extraordinary importance. Don't let an extraordinary problem enter. Yes, to many things very well. Expect a major change in the near ahead, perhaps as significant as in 1997.

Birthdate of: Alexander Graham Bell, inventor; Amy Irving, actress/singer; Jessica Biel, actress.

DAILY CROSSWORD

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE — BY MANO ABRERA

LOKENKOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

TULDOK — BY RAFLAND "BEUM" MAMBUNG

Int'l women's film fest ongoing at UP

ONGOING AT THE UP FILM INSTITUTE UNTIL MARCH 9 IS THE 18th International Women's Film Festival.

The festival opened on March 1 with the Victoria Abril movie, "Canto segundo," from Jeanne Labrune and closes with Niki Caro's "North Country," starring Charlize Theron, on March 8 at 7 p.m.

...from Chen's "Xin Xin: The Send Down Girl" was screened last night, and Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Ipagpatawad Mo" was live, at 3 p.m.

Today's movies: "Rush, It's Gone" from Iran, 5 p.m.; Lourdes Guillen's "Lucia (Lucia)," 7 p.m. Also, an intermission reels by Ia...Jaroslaw Sevcik Petrushevel at 2 p.m., the Spanish short "Historia Sin(e) De Ser" and Ingrid Bermudez's "Balboa."

Tomorrow: "In the Beginning Women was the Sun" from Japan, 2 p.m.; "Prompting Heart," 7 p.m.

March 5: "Cosmo and Carla," 5 p.m.

March 6: "Mga Pusang Gala" by Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil, 5 p.m.; Ishmael Bernal's "Relasyon," 7 p.m.

March 7: Jane Campion's "The Piano," 2 p.m.; the Grand Rami Prix winner, "Sepet," by Yasmin Ahmad of Malaysia, 5 p.m.; Patricia Rozema's "Mina Qaa Nia Mi Hivilee," 7 p.m. Call 926-5643.

18 RP films ...

Front page A1 >

...to be premiered from March 9 to 19, said Dita.

Mark Gary's "Sanglahing Buhay" part of the Cinema One digital film fest last year, was selected for the official selection section of the Newport Beach Film Festival, April 20 to 30.

Gwen Relos, like both Marel's "Tandoy" and Rica Maria Rardo's "Sa Ilalim ng Cogon" and "Separation" [of "Shake, Rattle and Roll 2007"], will be shown at the Cultus Far East Film Festival in Italy from April 21 to 29.

As reported earlier, 12 Films digital films are also bound for the Pohang International Film Festival in Switzerland, March 12 to 19, for screenings in a special section dubbed "Philippines: Digital Cinema from Resistance to Hindsight."

Three of its "Maestros (Directors)," Mes de Guzman's "Tribidad," "Hindsight," "Passing Gala," Rhoen de la Cruz's "Pagat," Joel Lamangan's "Tuhog," Sigfred Barros Sanchez's "Lastiman," Lito Tarriela's "Hilak" and Joel Ruiz's "Manyan."

Dita's "Dominar" is the lone Pinoy film in competition in February.

According to Evelyn Vargas-Kinabol, digital programmer of the Philippine section, it is "fitting to present all these new digital works on an international platform."

CHEER FACTOR

A time for Botox and caviar

Celebs pull out all the stops to be at their most fabulous for next week's Academy Awards night

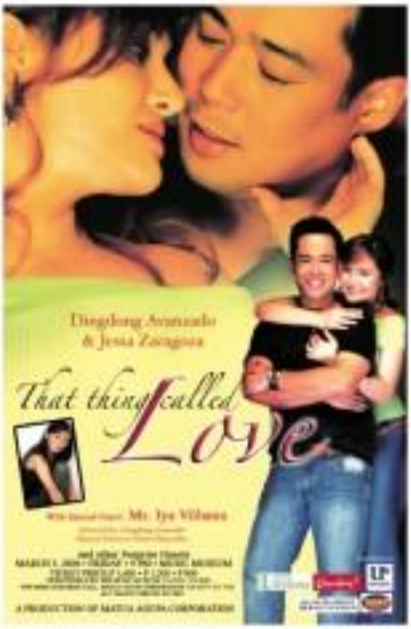
LOS ANGELES, CA... stylists are pulling out all the stops to look their thinnest and most fabulous in preparation for the Academy Awards on March 5.

If ever there was a time for a little bit of plastic surgery or a Botox injection, it's now, for the truly adventurous, there is caviar to be rubbed on skin rather than eaten on toast.

A spa product soaked gives moisturising caviar eye cream, purported to regenerate skin cells and impart a youthful glow.

The caviar cream is not for the faint-hearted. A publicist explains: "They don't want it to smell like food so putting fish eggs on your face."

New York dermatologist Dr Patricia Wexler said most people have treatments to relax Botox, chemical peels or fillers to plump up lips and cheeks. Wexler said she sees performed 0... procedures on an Oscar weekender days before the event to remove look for making the look of an expensive guest. Beauty



WHAT'S INSIDE

Customs exceeds February collection target B5
Strike at ABC-5 looms B3

BUSINESS

Edita Raul D. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Cecile S. Mariano

Peso still gaining ground

Feb 'hot money' inflows also hit 11-month high

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY HIT 51.22:$1—ITS LEVEL BEST IN nearly three-and-a-half years—as domestic security alert levels eased while other Asian currencies further gained ground against the US dollar.

Strong foreign investments in local stocks, bonds and bank products also supported the peso, as net portfolio inflows hit $516.3 million in February, reversing the net outflows of $117 million in January, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Last month's net portfolio inflows, or "hot money," was reported to be the highest in 11 months.

The local currency got to boom after it was reported that the three agencies tasked to oversee the domestic security situation would likely recommend the lifting of the state of national emergency within the 72-hour deadline set by President Macapagal-Arroyo Wednesday.

The peso opened at $1:₱51.30 and hit an intra-day low of $1:₱51.305 before surging to $1:₱51.22 against the greenback. Yesterday's rate was the peso's strongest finish since Aug. 1, 2002, when it closed at $1:₱51.115.

"The peso-end mood is show strength.

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CROSSWINDS Tagaytay
Brittany

San Miguel 2005 profit seen hitting ₱8.9B

National Foods, Berri leading revenue earners

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL CORP., SOUTHEAST ASIA's largest food and beverage firm, is expected to report a 2005 net income of P8.9 billion, slightly higher than the P8 billion posted in 2004, driven by sources said Friday.

It is done, but slightest will beat expectations by some analysts that it will post a record 2005 net income of between P7.3 billion and P7.8 billion.

Analysts were not so bullish on San Miguel due to the conglomerate's high financing charges and the anemic sales growth of its beverage and liquor units.

Some say that the double-digit earnings growth more than offset the high financing charges, thus, leading to a profit growth for 2005.

Analysts expect revenues to grow between 21 and 24 percent in 2005 with contributions from San Miguel's newly acquired international businesses.

These businesses are Australia's giant Sunbeam Foods Ltd. and brewery rival Ltd., as well as Malaysian ice cream brand, Ping's Corporation.

In the third quarter last year, National Foods pitched in 14 percent to total revenues and accounted for 33 percent of total operating profits.

Local businesses did not fare as well.

Leo Simonetti, analyst in SDC Gas Eng Securities told San Miguel's beer liquor unit, Ginebra San Miguel Inc., would weigh on the parent firm's growth due to the high rate of its tax receivable.

Consumers have also started shifting to lower interest of beer liquor since the price difference between gin and beer has narrowed.

Improvements in beer revenues of brewery ape subsidiary, Coca-Cola Group, have also to bear fruit.

Nestle Espinosa, analyst at online broker 2Tradersin.Com, also said demand for food and beverage last year was pulled down by the imposition of the expanded value added tax.

"We are hoping for a slightly better performance this year as San Miguel begins to integrate its acquisitions," Espinosa said.

San Miguel recorded year income of P5.23 billion in the first nine months last year, down 6.1 percent from P5.57 billion in the same period the previous year due to high financing charges on loans used to acquire control of three-san dairy National Foods.

Financing charges amounted to P3.28 billion during the period, without which the net income would have increased by 1 percent.

During the nine-month period, San Miguel's consolidated revenues grew 10 percent year-on-year to P261 billion.

Analysts then had expected San Miguel's debt-funded acquisitions to hurt its earnings.

San Miguel said National Foods Ltd. and Berri Ltd. made hefty contributions to foreign investors in the January-September period.

The conglomerate of Pinkerod Foods for San Miguel, beginning in June, contributed P13.9 billion in revenue and P1.46 billion in operating profit as of end-September last year.

San Miguel said it registered double-digit growth across its businesses during the period.

However, the rising costs of raw materials, packaging and other manpower game its operating income to P12.2 billion, up 9 percent year-on-year.

Nañagas quits as DBP prexy

By Doris C. Dumlao

DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES chair Ma.Alma Nañagas II has resigned as president of the state-run banks following a row in with the bank's higher management, banking sources said yesterday.

Giving "personal reasons," Nañagas submitted a copy of his "irrevocable" resignation to the government bank's board of directors during last Wednesday's meeting, sources said.

Nañagas reportedly had a falling out with BSP president Reynaldo David, whose management style clashed with his own.

DBP sources said Nañagas also had clashes with other bank staff.

The resignation will be effective as soon as it is accepted by Malacañang, the sources said.

When asked about the matter, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said yesterday he did not know whether Nañagas' resignation had been accepted by Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Nañagas and DBP president David were not available for comment as of press time.

Before joining DBP, Nañagas was president of the Philippine Stock Exchange and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Prior to joining government service, Nañagas spent over 20 years working for various financial institutions, including Citibank/Citicorp (Manila & New York, 1972-1988), Bank of the Philippine Islands (director and member of executive committee, 1990), Monte de Piedad Savings Bank (director, 1994- 1995), First Metro Investment Corporation (Vice Chairman/Director, 1995-1998), Global Business Bank (president & CEO/director, 1998-1998) and the Equitable-PCI Bank (vice chairman, 2001).

TRADERS talk on the phone at the Philippine Stock Exchange. Share prices closed 0.11 percent higher yesterday, after President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would give up emergency powers as the earliest possible time. The President's statement helped ease political concerns, dealers said. AFP

Megaworld '05 income up 43%

PROPERTY developer Megaworld Corporation reported a 43-percent increase in its to-tonne last year to P1.19 billion from P808 million in 2004.

Megaworld said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that revenues last year were up 18.3 percent to P5.22 billion.

Ongoing residential projects contributed to the company's strong earnings performance, according to Megaworld treasurer and spokesperson Francis Giesen.

These projects included Eastwood Parkview, Grand Eastwood Palazzo and One Orchard Road in Eastwood City, Bonifacio Heights at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig, and Greenbelt Residences and Greenbelt Parkplace in Makati.

Megaworld became also contributed to revenue growth, pitching in P547.81 million from P454.65 million in 2004. Megaworld's flagship project, Eastwood City, accounted for the bulk of the rental earnings, with its Cyber One office building and City Walk 2 leisure strip posting healthy occupancy levels last year.

Cash and cash equivalents balance, at P5.65 billion, was 6 percent more year-on-year.

Current ratio stood at 1.54:1. Total equity rose by six percent to P17.87 billion from P16.77 billion in 2004.

"The company, with current asset amounting to almost P13 billion and a bank debt-to-equity ratio of 0.07:1, is in a strong liquidity position," Cancio said.

"This year, we expect our residential projects in Fort Bonifacio – Bellagio, Parkwood Parkview and McKinley Hill Village — and The Residential Resort at Newport City at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City, to be major value drivers," he said in a statement.

Bellagio and Parkwood Parkview are part of the P13 billion Forbes Town Center in the Global City.

McKinley Hill Village, which offers subdivision lots to a high-end market, is the first residential phase of Megaworld's 38-hectare McKinley Hill mixed-use project in Fort Bonifacio.

The Residential Resort, meanwhile, is a low-density 3.7-hectare community close to the Villamor golf course. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Peso still gaining ground

From page B1

drawing from the market's dollar-selling commitments on Wednesday supports dollar sales, portfolio inflows, as well as overseas Filipino workers' remittances," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

The peso gained another 36 centavos from Wednesday's closing rate of 51.38 to the US dollar.

The peso continues to gain against the greenback for the fourth straight trading day, since the **emergency declaration was revoked Friday and political tensions escalated over the weekend.**

"The peso was also supported by stronger regional currencies and weak corporate demand," Tetangco said.

Trading volume at the Philippine Dealing System was still heavy at $868.1 million.

"Offshore traders are selling US dollars," one currency trader said.

The Japanese yen, Thai baht, Singaporean dollar and Indonesian rupiah likewise strengthened against the US dollar.

Yesterday, political fences began to ease after the heads of the Department of Justice, Department of Defense and the Philippine National Police said the situation had vastly improved and that they could recommend the **lifting of the state of emergency.**

Foreign analysts said the lifting of the state of emergency was needed to ease uncertainty in the financial markets.

After the profit-taking that led to net outflows in January, portfolio investments in the country rebounded in February despite the political concerns that weighed on the country's sovereign credit rating.

In the first two months of the year, the country chalked up $390.3 million in net portfolio inflows...smaller than the $877.4 million posted in the same period last year.

Disclosures

LAWYER ROSE M. Flores has resigned from **Liberty Telecoms Holdings Inc.** as corporate secretary and information officer Feb. 28, 2006. Company chair Raymond M. Mariano hired Atty. Evangeline Ordinario as acting corporate secretary until a permanent replacement is appointed.

***

BDO Holdings Inc. disclosed a total of 7,400 outstanding preferred shares.

***

ELPIDIO Antonio Mijares and Prudencio C. Somera Jr. have resigned as independent directors of **Semi Overchain Industrial Holdings Inc., Basic Petroleum and Minerals Inc., and Basic Consolidated Industrial Inc.**, subsidiaries of Basic Consolidated Inc.

***

Lynchburg will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 4, 4 p.m. at Uma Ilaw Building, Pembroke, Paseo de Roxas across Filipinas Street, Makati City. *Compiled by Kala Paderes, PDI Research*

Shares ...

From page B4

based about the current political situation, but investor about possible further weakness and as were unwilling to push prices too much further ahead.

As such, the market is likely to enter a consolidation period and move in a narrow range in coming sessions, unless there are further political surprises.

The composite index added 2.24 points to 2,037.61, a new month-high. It traded between 2,028.23 and 2,110.99. Volume was 667.35 million shares worth P1.2 billion (825.46 million).

The all-shares index gained 2.09 points to 1,827.22.

Losers outnumbered gainers 92 to 37, with 58 stocks unchanged.

The peso was at 51.26 to the dollar by midday.

Top-traded Ayala Corp. ended up P13.50 to P340, supported by heavy buying from foreign investors following its sell-off last week. PLDT was up P30 to P1,810. AFP

Currencies

March 2, 2006 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Euro Equivalent
United States	Dollar	51.3000	1.000000	61.4100
Japan	Yen	0.441210	0.008601	0.5286
United Kingdom	Pound	88.8100	1.731000	106.4000
Hong Kong	Dollar	6.6049	0.128800	7.9120
Switzerland	Franc	40.0000	0.779700	47.9200
Canada	Dollar	43.8900	0.855700	52.5800
Singapore	Dollar	31.9970	0.623700	38.3300
Australia	Dollar	39.5400	0.770700	47.3600
Malaysia	Ringgit	13.8100	0.269200	16.5400
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	13.6770	0.266600	16.3800
Brunei	Dollar	31.1100	0.606500	37.2800
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.005400	0.000105	0.0065
Thailand	Baht	1.2900	0.025100	1.5400
UAE	Dirham	13.9700	0.272300	33.5200
China	Yuan	6.3400	0.123600	7.5900
Korea	Won	0.0433	0.000844	0.0519
Argentina	Peso	16.5000	0.321700	19.7700
Brazil	Real	23.7600	0.463200	28.4600
Mexico	Peso	4.7400	0.092400	5.6800
Taiwan	Dollar	1.5400	0.030000	1.8400
Vietnam	Dong	0.0032	0.000062	0.0038
Bahrain	Dinar	135.9000	2.649000	162.8000
Kuwait	Dinar	176.2000	3.435000	211.1000
Oman	Rial	133.2000	2.596000	159.6000
Qatar	Riyal	14.0900	0.274600	16.8800
Bahrain	Riyal	13.6000	0.265100	16.2900
Egypt	Pound	8.9200	0.173900	10.6900
Jordan	Dinar	72.3400	1.410000	86.6700
Lebanon	Pound	0.0340	0.000663	0.0408
Syria	Pound	0.9900	0.019300	1.1900
Taiwan	NT Dollar	1.5400	0.030000	1.8400
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.0239	0.000466	0.0286

Strike at ABC-5 looms

By Dixie L. Lucir

THE OPERATIONS of the Associated Broadcasting Corp. may be paralyzed next week after the employees' union of the network's third largest company voted in favor of declaring a strike.

During a vote called by the union last week, 114 employees voted in favor of a strike, 34 voted against it, while 13 more votes from the employees of ABC-5's outstanding parties have all but collapsed after their agreement asked Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas to exercise jurisdiction over the case—a move which union employees said would prevent their final waging a strike and weaken their bargaining position.

In a telephone interview, ABC-5's union president Carlo Hernando said rank and file employees were prepared to go on strike on Monday. The network union asked management to grant its members seniority of issues and compensation in the event they are laid off.

Hernando's one of the unionized workers pay and retirement benefits as part of their five-year collective bargaining agreement effective 2005-2010.

Management, for its part, is resisting on a favorable dividend limit favorably this. Issues to have the case decided in her office on grounds that a strike would endanger the "national interest."

"As a broadcast company, we have a duty to stay in operation especially during Cherie Gilma," according to ABC-5's director for human resources Hans Sicangco.

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SITE LOCATION: BAYANTEL WAREHOUSE, REGALADO AVE., NOVALICHES, Q.C.
AUCTION DATE: MAR. 8, 2006 (WED) @ 10:30 AM
(222) UNITS USED SERVICE VEHICLES OF
BAYANTEL & SCRAP WIRES
(1) '95 DAEWOO 4DR SEDAN; (2) '94/96 TOYOTA TAMARAW FX; (4) '94/95/96 MITSUBISHI L200 FB; (7) '94 MITSUBISHI L200 MUV; (2) '93 NISSAN 2BDA AUV; (2) '94 NISSAN PATHFINDER 4x4; (1) '96 ISUZU 6D22DD CREW CAB PICK-UP; (1) '95 SUZUKI SAMURAI 4x4; (1) '96 MITSUBISHI L200 4x4; (1) '95 SUZUKI FB HI AND SCRAP WIRES
REFUNDABLE / CONSUMABLE DEPOSIT OF P10,000
WAREHOUSE AUCTION
REGISTRATION & VIEWING DATES: MAR. 10-11, 2006, 9:00AM-5:00PM
SITE LOCATION: 2ND OLD NATIONAL HIGHWAY, STO.CRISTO, PULILAN, BULACAN
AUCTION DATE: MAR. 12, 2006 (SUN) @ 10:30 AM
UNITED OVERSEAS BANK (9 BRANCHES)
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(LOCATION)
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Online broker bullish

By Abigail L. Ho

ONLINE STOCK BROKERAGE firm Ortigas Online is banking on the declining cost of connectivity and the anticipated growth in its target generation to attract investors to a market double its current base to 1,000 by 2007.

"The stories will pick up as people become more familiar with it," Ortigas Online president Consuelo Ruiz said in an interview yesterday.

Existing and potential investors based in the provinces would also benefit from online trading, he said, since they would no longer have to go through brokers in Manila to execute their trades.

Many of the company's current top clients, he said, were based in the Visayas.

Ortigas Online's current user base registered an average monthly turnover of P5 million each, he said.

He noted that this was limited by the poor in the coming months as the country's Internet penetration rate improves and the cost of connectivity drops.

According to research firm IDC, the number of Internet users in the country will almost double to 21.5 million by 2008 from 11.8 million as of 2004.

The volume of e-commerce transactions in the country was also expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 16 percent from 2005-2009, Ruiz said.

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Bond Fund - Peso	1.08819	1.08160
Managed Fund - Peso	1.51051	1.50194
Growth Fund - Peso	1.13535	1.13414
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2430	1.2370

Investment Funds of	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	Feb. 27, 2006	Feb. 20, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.134816	1.128995
Balanced Fund	1.109381	1.113487
Equity Fund	1.024966	1.029117

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InFocus
The Big Picture

Customs exceeds February collection target

Renewed anti-smuggling campaign paying off

By Michelle V. Ramos and Leila B. Salaverria

SUSTAINING THE MOMENTUM ACHIEVED at the start of the year, the Bureau of Customs surpassed its revenue target for February, posting total collections of P12.49 billion.

The February collection was about 2 percent higher than the target of P12.25 billion, and 15.3 percent better than year-ago level.

This brought the BOC's total collection for the first two months of the year to P26.88 billion, surpassing the two-month goal of P24.36 billion.

In January, the BOC also exceeded its goal, collecting P12.396 billion compared with the P12.093 billion target.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales attributed the BOC's positive performance in the first two months of the year largely to the revitalized campaign of the agency against smuggling.

According to a BOC report, nine of the bureau's 18 collection districts exceeded their February targets.

The Port of Batangas posted the biggest surplus of P787 million, followed by the Port of Manila with P686 million.

Also exceeding their targets were the collection districts at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, by P563 million; Iloilo, by P53.5 million; Zamboanga, by P5.5 million; Subic, by P5 million; and Tacloban, by P1.4 million; Legaspi, by P400,000; and Clark, by P300,000.

Failing to meet their goals were the Manila International Container Port, and the Ports of Cebu, Zamboanga, San Fernando, Surigao, Cagayan de Oro and Davao.

The bureau's performance in the first two months of the year bucked earlier considering that January and February are traditionally lean seasons in terms of importation, Morales said.

Despite the first two-month performance, however, Morales said it was still difficult to say that its full-year target was easily achievable.

"While the customs police will boost confidence, the agency cannot sit on its laurels as the March first (sic) is (on its way)," Morales said in a statement.

The BOC is given the daunting task of raising P1.92 billion in cash this year 2006. The amount is 27 percent higher than its 2005 target of P 215 billion. Including non-cash collections, the target increases to P 300 billion.

The BOC, the second biggest revenue source of the national government following the Bureau of Internal Revenue, is preserved to meet its target to keep the government on track of the goal of reducing, and eventually eliminating, the budget deficit.

In 2005, the deficit stood at P146.3 billion, still huge but was already much lower than the ceiling of P 180 billion set for last year.

The government has set a goal of reducing the deficit to P125 billion this year, and to totally wipe out the budget gap by 2008.

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NOTICE OF EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT THE BEST OFFER (BLOCK SALE OF EQUITABLE-PCI BANK SHARES)

In view of the requests of interested parties brought about by recent events/developments, the deadline for the submission of the offers to purchase GSIS' holdings of Equitable-PCI Bank common shares is hereby extended to April 6, 2006.

The invitation to submit the best offer follows:

The GSIS hereby offers in a block sale its holdings of 80,570,103 Equitable-PCI Bank shares, equivalent to 12.6% of the Bank's outstanding capital stock, at a minimum cash offer of P92.00 per share.

Offers to purchase should be accompanied by a cashier's or manager's check equivalent to ten (10%) percent of the total offered price and should be submitted not later than April 6, 2006, 3:00 pm at the following address:

MR. LINA ALICIA R. RAMOS
Vice President, Investment Office
Level 3, Core D, GSIS Building
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

Interested parties should comply with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) rules and regulations on ownership restrictions in banks, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

The GSIS reserves the right to reject any or all offers and to annul the process, to waive any required formality therein, or to accept such offers as may be advantageous to the GSIS without giving any reason therefor and without incurring any liability to the affected offerors. Further, the offeror shall be liable for any and all costs incurred in its participation and the GSIS assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the offerors or any of its agents, for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this undertaking.

For more information, contact Ms. Ramos at telephone numbers 834-2668 and 851-9161 local 4981.

(Original Signed)
EMELITA J. TIANGCO
Executive Vice President
Finance Sector

Bureau of Customs and agriculture

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

CAN THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS TRANSform itself from being the farmers' worst enemy to its best friend?

In 2005, it did just that. Then President Senate Guard Said General Hermogenes Esperon reported that 40 percent of imported smuggled goods. Within three months, the smuggling was stopped to less than 1 percent.

Success story

This was due to Esperon's efforts through the PNP, and the active involvement of the Mission Agriculture farmers and the Bureau of Customs, then under Commissioner Antonio Bernardo. In addition to an anti-smuggling campaign, Morris Manalo, commissioned smuggled goods. Within three months, the smuggling was stopped to less than 1 percent.

COMMENTARY

Since no one had ever been jailed for smuggling, the practical way to punish the smugglers is to impose heavy fines, starting from the first goods. The smugglers did this through paying a small financial penalty or settling the payment for those goods at less than cost. Investors thought again.

Bernardo removed those very obstructions. He allowed the disposition of smuggled goods only through re-export, destruction and donation to charitable institutions. With these new policies and the increased cooperation between the BOC and the farmers, the smuggling was stopped significantly.

There are now positive indications of this. The depressed export price of P7 per kilo, mainly due to the smuggled onions, increased back to its former levels even price of P12. This saved the livelihoods of 40,000 Candelarian onion farmers.

Makati Business Club meeting

Two days ago, in a break with its usual practice, the Makati Business Club invited small fishers and farmers, through the Philippine Industries from the BOC, indicated that this first shipment was released. Also, the BOC is also still has outstanding financial obligations of more than P400 million, a case on that has been pending in court. BOC provider Jesus Jimenez said, "This firm must have a stronghold on the previous DENR administration. Tampong mahalaga ang kapit."

Secretary Reyes has since suspended Isidro from the BOC implementation.

New initiatives

At the MBC meeting, BOC offered more promising new initiatives.

Director Ray Uriarte said that BOC would use private consumer lawyers to deputize or empower us to fore than After The Smugglers (DATS) program. Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales stated he was willing to abuse the issued Personal Blanketos (PBAs) with the Departments of Agriculture and Trade and Industry. This is currently under study.

The PBA has the products being imported, the shipping used, and the date of its arrival. However, only the BOC has these PBAs. With the 24 and the DTI also having this list, and the private sector harnessed to help with the information, smuggling is expected to substantially decrease.

Today United Nations data show that $1.6 billion worth of exports to the Philippines are not reported by BOC. With this improvement, assuming a 1.2 percent VAT and an average tariff of 6 percent, this could yield as much as P90 billion more in tax revenue.

A danger

However, a danger was highlighted by Bernardo Pelos of the Confederation of Port Users. He said that a BOC-supported order was on the verge of being sent for publication to partially implement EO 1900, or the Customs' Modern Act. This order might limit participants in the import transaction process to only licensed brokers. This would prevent other parties like associations which were the imported goods and lawyers from exercising their functions, in the past, these consumers groups have done also this responsibility and legitimately.

Pelos said, "The danger in the wrong implementation of this law through this customs' order is that costs will increase, jobs will be lost, business will be delayed and much needed additional revenues will be lost every month for Philippine because of the imposition of unreasonable and self-serving restrictions."

It was discovered that the desired remedies are in this order and the stakeholders, including the farmers and fishers, have seen from trade. It is therefore recommended that this order be delayed until these considerations take place. Then, despite some hitches, the BOC can continue its path to becoming the best friend, rather than the worst enemy, of agriculture.

(The author is Agrisearch director for inquiries and suggestions, email agrisearch@philsa.net or cellphone 0918 8855351.)

Round-up

PNOC prepaying portion of $175-M loan

(SEE ALSO: CHINESE FIRMS APPOINT BETTER TIES, ED. CO. is set to prepay $175 million of a $1.16-billion oil exploration credit facility provided by foreign lenders.

Banking sources said PNOC had submitted to the Monetary Board its intention to pay a portion of the debt ahead of maturity.

The credit facility was arranged by Citibank and Standard Chartered Bank.

Sources said PNOC would use portion of the $260,000 in savings from interest payment in settling its loans.

PNOC was created in 1973 to provide and maintain an adequate and stable supply of oil, focusing its efforts and resources in the petroleum industry. Its charter permits it to undertake exploration, exploitation and development. — Doris C. Dumlao

Gokongwei airline offers P10 fare

CEBU PACIFIC AIR IS OFFERING A P10 (USD 0.19) one-way fare by any of its domestic destinations to celebrate its 10th year in the business. The airline started operations on March 1, 1996.

Passengers may buy the tickets only from March 2 to 5 at all Cebu Pacific Air ticket offices from June 30 to July 31. Over 1,000,000 seats are available for all of the Gokongwei-owned airline's aircraft for this anniversary promotion, the company said in a statement.

The P10 one-way fare is exclusive of taxes and surcharges and was available on a first come first served basis.

Cebu Pacific general manager Kong Madrid said the promo marks a milestone in Philippine aviation history.

"We do believe fare is airline affordable to the low," he said.

The company's 19 fleet can be booked and ticketed throughout its network, www.cebupacific.com.ph. The tickets are also available through the nine reservations office at 632-0888 in Cebu City, its ticket offices and accredited travel agents. — Dianne C. Lucas

TMT unit in RP launches new service

THE GUAM, UNIT OF HONG KONG-BASED TO-business delivery firm TNT International Express has launched a new service that caters its high-value shipments that require maximum safekeeping amid rising worldwide consciousness on security and the local political climate.

Dubbed Raymond G. Zialcita, TNT Philippines country general manager, said the new service would guarantee shipments are off 30 hours ahead of providing clients a secured and safe way of transporting goods by their packages and commodities to be planned and detailed method of any given time "to any destination in the country."

"The new service we can have out of Lanai," Ching said. "The vehicles are now one not like those that have been used before. Vehicles are specially identified and recommended."

He said TNT Philippines has initially allotted several trucks which were equipped with technologically advanced security features like CCTV, effective tracking and alert systems.

Ching said a detailed security process and procedure checks are undertaken daily before, during, and after the shipment of the goods. — Roland M. Dizon

Philrealty ready to settle obligations

PHILIPPINE REALTY AND HOLDINGS CORP. said the Philippine Stock Exchange that it was withdrawing its appeal on the rehabilitation court's order to affirm that provided for a combination of balance sheet arrangement and restructuring of the company's outstanding obligations to Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. (Metro Recovery Corp. (MRC).

After a series of meetings of its operations and financial performance since the issuance of the rehabilitation on June 17, 2004, Philrealty has decided it would be able to settle its outstanding obligations to Metrobank/MRC.

"The company has thus decided to accept said obligations," Philrealty said in a statement.

Microsoft

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BUSINESS

Gov't shrugs off Ayala offer for IS property

Outright cash preferred to boost state finances

By Michelle V. Rerta

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE Ayala group are less likely to strike a deal on the sale of a state-owned property in Makati City, which used to house the International School, due to differences in the terms of the sale.

Finance Undersecretary Gabriel Singson Jr., who oversees the government's privatization program, told reporters that the Ayala group had offered a joint venture arrangement with the government for the property's development.

"Joint ventures will only be considered if other offers fail. We prefer outright sale because we want cash," Singson said.

Under a joint venture scheme, the government would start receiving income from the property only after it has been developed by the winning bidder. An outright sale would give the government immediate cash, which it needs to help plug the country's budget deficit.

The 4.6-hectare property is being sold for at least ₱1.2 billion, or ₱52,000 per square meter, although the government has expressed willingness to adjust the figure.

The price was largely the reason for the failure of previous attempts to bid out the property. Prospective buyers deemed the asking price too high.

He said the government would offer it to treat the Ayalas' offer as has option now that it has received several outright sale offers from other interested buyers. Singson, however, declined to identify the potential buyers but said the government's privatization team was now studying all the proposals.

The International School used to own the Makati property but it was later returned to the government by virtue of a decree issued by former President Ferdinand Marcos.

In another development, Singson said the government had moved to securitize a financial asset that would help in the privatization of Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines.

Al-Amanah is the only Islamic bank in the country it was established through the issuance of Republic Act No. 6848 by then President Corazon Aquino.

Under the concept of Islamic banking, customers do not earn interests on their deposits but they as partners, get shares from the profits arising from the bank's investment activities.

A LEISURE STROLL TO *Galleria*

EAST OF GALLERIA

A unique and refreshing lifestyle is now here in the heart of Ortigas Center

Welcome to East of Galleria, a 35-storey residential tower located in the midst of the bustling business district. It is conveniently located beside the very successful Robinsons Galleria Mall to cater to the residents' daily needs. Minutes away from major roads like EDSA and C-5, it is also within the vicinity of malls, banks, restaurants and other major establishments.

East of Galleria truly embodies the ideal of comfort and convenience, offering the best of both worlds with the choice of either bi-level or loft-type units. Available in one, two and three-bedroom units, East of Galleria assures residents of utmost privacy in condo living as the master's bedroom is located a level above the dining, kitchen and living areas. High ceilings, airy atmosphere and expansive glass windows feature breathtaking views of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club as well as a multitude of magnificent skylines.

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BUSINESS Friday

E-mail: pi_business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Rapista

Good service best way to beat competition

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE ARE MANY WEAPONS retailers use to beat competition and increase profits.

There's coming up with better, more affordable products and services, and capturing the loyalty of old customers and getting new ones by delivering superior customer service.

Business Monday features retail outfits in the Philippines that take customer service seriously.

Gateway Mall

It's "like no other mall in the world."

That's the proud boast of the Araneta group when describing the Gateway mall at the heart of the sprawling Araneta Center in Quezon City.

And visitors of the mall will likely agree.

Some P2.3 billion was spent on construction and development of the five-level retail and entertainment center beside the historic Araneta Coliseum.

But more than the infrastructure, Araneta Center marketing manager Cecile Marvilla says Gateway is also about superior service, making the mall feel more like a hotel than just a shopping area.

One of the main attractions is the concierge desk. Just like in hotels, the concierge will help shoppers with almost anything they require. They can reserve seats for restaurants, movie tickets and provide directions.

Marvilla says there are plans to make the concierge go a step further and provide personal shopping services to those who want it.

There's valet parking, bright underground parking, premier slots in the basement.

The efforts to get the extra mile have not been for naught.

Marvilla says the mall attracted the upper crust of Philippine society into the Araneta Center, which has long been associated with the haves to middle-income classes.

Marvilla says customer service had a lot to do with this.

"We at Araneta believe that when you give excellent service, you create goodwill. That makes customers come back for more," she says.

AT POWERBOOKS, ambience is everything

AT CSIGNAL, sales clerks can give tips on what clothes will suit a customer

Pizza Hut

Filipinos love pizza.

That's why it comes as no surprise that there is a pizza parlor in almost every corner, which means new dining for operators of pizza chain: tougher competition.

Given the stiff competition from both local and international pizza chains, Pizza Hut embarked on a major customer service enhancement program last year to keep its customers loyal and win over new ones.

Lars Sorensen, chief operating officer of Pizza Hut in the Philippines, says in an interview that the process actually started more than a year ago when the company set up more stringent criteria for hiring personnel who will serve the customers.

"We try to look for people with a great attitude, a great smile," Sorensen says. "Sit before we can train everything else, but not the attitude."

That attitude is brought to the fore through "Customer Mania," a training program for new employees aimed at making them giving the best experience to customers. Refresher courses are provided every quarter.

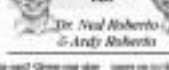
Improved service was not lost on the customers, as reflected in the 100-percent increase in sales last year, which is in addition to what the service crew earns from the service charge.

Training was complemented by a renovation of the Pizza Hut for that chunky, round dining chair to some 100 restaurants all over the country.

Pizza Hut estimates that 20 percent of the growth was due to refurbishment spending more and the 80 percent from new customers.

GOOD BIZ »

'We can't afford mass media, so what else can we use to build awareness?'



Q: I'M IN A DIRECT selling business for several categories of consumers goods. Is there any other way or any other media that can increase awareness for our products just as much as mass media can? Given our size and gross margin, we just can't afford to regularly go TV, radio and/or print.

A: Since you're marketing "several consumer product categories" you must also be carrying a number of brands across the categories you're selling. This means that you should also be thinking of awareness for your company, as much as if not more than, for the products and brands you're carrying. So if you want to raise awareness for your direct selling company but can't afford TV, radio or print, why don't you try word-of-mouth (WOM)? It's also known as "buzz" media.

Lazarsfeld's opinion leaders

Contrary to most advertisers' current impression that WOM is one of the "new" media, this is an old media. It dates back to 50 years ago when famous Columbia University sociologist and survey research pioneer, Paul Lazarsfeld, first popularized it in the late '40s. He referred to it as personal media specifically in the pursuit of what he called "opinion leaders." Lazarsfeld in less remembered for his 2-step-flow model of the communication process. Lazarsfeld's extensive studies showed that, "Ideas often flow from radio and print to opinion leaders and from these to the less active sections of the population." Stories that Lazarsfeld refers to radio and print, the two primary media of the 40s and early 50s.

Lazarsfeld dreamed in his communication studies that it is the opinion leaders' personal relay of the radio and print messages that multiply their audience reach. The smart media are "sticktive" media while the opinion leaders' WOM communication is "multiplicative."

Lazarsfeld's work is still influencing direct marketers like those in your business. His work's advertising implication is simple but powerful. It says that if you want your advertisement to cost-effectively reach its target customers, then direct your ad messages to opinion leaders first. Then let these opinion leaders pass those messages on to the rest of the people in their individual communities.

If you think about it, this is what pharmaceutical companies still do in promoting (or "detailing") their ethical prescription products to doctors. The more influential and top-prescribing doctors are detailed first and the campaign relies on these top prescribers to persuade by example or WOM other doctors.

This is one of the current versions of Lazarsfeld's model. It regards mass media as dispensable. After all, it's just an addictive media. Its role can go directly to the multiplicative media—the opinion leaders' WOM.

Since Lazarsfeld, WOM would go out of fashion but would always resurge. One resurgence and version has added something virtual. Jerry Wind's 1991 book, Word of Mouth Marketing, brought it out as an issue asking: "What kind of advertising can motivate opinion leaders to give the advertisement the 'Word-Of-Mouth'?" It's not just the message. It also includes the ad execution. If either one or both have "conversation value," then opinion leaders will talk to others about it, says Wind.

There are advertisements that give a conversation value to both their message and execution. Take the one of the McDonald's TV commercial where a baby in a swing alternately between a happy ayy (when it sees the yellow golden arch) and an unhappy cry (when the golden arch was no longer visible). The message is clear: "Here's a place to keep your baby happy." When people saw the TV ad they even called family members to watch it. The message's execution dramatized the message with emotional depth.

There can also be an opposite. An ad whose message and/or execution communicates a negative conversation value. Avoid this opposite if you want wholesome quality awareness.

BUSINESS BIZ »

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BUSINESS Friday

Good service ...

From page B1-1

Peterson says Plaza Uni is also working on improving the delivery and take-out businesses, which a part of the country's biggest chain's efforts to stay on top.

"Improving service is like a journey without an end. We have to be better because our competition is also getting better," Peterson adds.

Power Books

If bookstores in the Philippines will be judged based solely on the rules, then there is not much room for differentiation as almost all stores carry the same line of books.

So what then does the customer look for in a bookstore for him to decide to buy the book there over the next one round the corner?

Power Books Specialty Store thought about that question long and hard, and one of the answers it came up with was customer service, which it defines as taking good care of the customers.

Its employees at Power Books general manager Marilene Gabriel Lizasoc, the key for the company is to create an environment where customers will want to come in, browse and hopefully buy a book.

This explains the deliberate display of the books where best sellers are placed nearest the entrance so customers can immediately get hold of the hottest selling items.

There are computer terminals installed for buyers to look up their favorite titles without going through the shelves. They can even check out the Internet for other stores, in case the title is sold out in another.

New titles are also prominently displayed, as well as the recommended titles by the six Power Books stores.

The sales people are also trained enough so they can readily respond to questions, and even recommend other titles.

Lizasoc adds that Power Books offers an ordering service for its customers. They will simply fill out the form with the title they want, and they can expect delivery in about three weeks, at less the cost of buying the book from Amazon.

For those with really hectic schedules, Power Books also delivers the books for free within Metro Manila as long as the value of the books meet the minimum requirement of P1,000.

He says these efforts are part of Power Books' vision to get more Filipinos to read.

"Our ultimate goal is to increase literacy in the Philippines," he says.

The Travel Club

For The Travel Club, it is not its line of premium luggage from Victorinox, Samsonite and Arc that is the more important thing in the store outlets. It's the customers.

This is why the country's biggest retail chain that sells luggage takes great pain to provide excellent customer relations, says The Travel Club marketing manager Cess Tullao-Ateneta.

To keep customers loyal, The Travel Club offers marketing incentives such as special discounts, promotions and free gifts to make them feel special.

So the staff, The Travel Club provider training called Extended Customer Experience.

The objective is to help the staff identify and describe the customers' needs and expectations for them to provide the appropriate service.

Ateneta says it makes sense for the company to ensure quality customer service because it does reflect on the bottom line.

Ateneta says there are many things a customer looks for in customer service.

These include: credibility, professionalism, product knowledge, problem-solving skills, presentation skills, negotiating skills and knowledge of market data.

Ateneta says that it is because of customer service that The Travel Club has been in business for over 14 years, and has become the main one-stop shop for quality bags and bag gags.

Cignal

For the Cignal fashion Specialty Store, customers are everything.

"They keep the line going, so we take customer service very seriously," says Lilen Rosario-Villarica, one of Cignal's owners.

Serving their needs means providing customers with new styles about five times a year and picking them advice on what clothes will look best on them.

Villarica says that by keeping a close watch on what their customers wants, Cignal is better able to come up with new styles in cater to the needs of their market, which they define as the career woman, who wants to dress well, but are still price conscious.

Since they want to dress well, Villarica says Cignal couldn't be a outlet as only manufacturers limited number of pieces per style, to minimize the chances of customers bumping into each other on the road wearing the same clothes.

Cignal also keeps track of prime customers, for whom the store can arrange special fitting sessions.

She says it is only by going the extra mile to provide good service that fashion stores like hers can outlast the competition, especially in the Philippines where there's stiff competition in the fashion industry in particular, and the retail industry in general.

What's in store for Pana in 2006?

(Condensed speech of Rino Fernando, 2006 Pana president)

AD BUZZ

WHENEVER AN AFFAIR AS PRESTIGIOUS is an indication in the office of a president or chairman-accord, I notice that the audience almost always waits in anticipation for some earth-shaking announcement. Such was my experience during the recently installed officers and board of directors of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) for 2006 where I, once again, was privileged to have been entrusted the top position. Unfortunately, I had no earthshaking announcement simply because I felt that there was no need for one. I preferred to focus on some unfinished business and new things that I hope would bring about extraordinary changes within the organization. That goal is to continue strengthening the Philippine Association of National Advertisers.

Not too long ago, the Pana board held its annual planning session. This session allowed us to have a relatively view of the prevailing business conditions. Many markets are now declining in consumers disposable income and/or eliminate consumptions, advertisers keep on searching for new outreach and approaches. Many advertising monies wisely, and new media for business communications are openly available. Amid these factors, the board felt the need to further strengthen the organization so that its members, the advertisers, can maximize businesses more effectively, and in turn, serve their consumers—the consumers.

The board summed these needs as one where the organization needs to be strengthened.

First, is the need to further reinforce the backbone of Pana—its administration. We saw the need to continue improving the people, process, and systems of the organization. We need to look at a "hotel" mindset as we train the staff toward excellence membership service. We look at the computerization of the accounting and manpower appraisal systems, the membership database, and the library of information. And we need to look at a more dynamic and contemporary website that will include links to the member companies, providing assistance in their queries.

Second, is the need to continue to help develop future leaders in the industry through some of the organization's educational programs, seminars, and workshops such as the Pana convention, the media and general meetings and the mid-planning sessions with other industry groups. Hopefully, these functions can serve as opportunities for our members to see how they can come up with methods on how to further improve their businesses through the present state of the environment.

And last, is the need to continue to involve Pana in industry development. Pana believes that its member-organization, the AdBoard, is, and remains to be the most objective and competent representative body for self-regulation in advertising content. Therefore, the organization pledges to remain active and participative to all decisions related to its Advertising Content Regulation Committee (ACRC), its president, and in the review of the Advertising Code of Ethics. Pana will continue executing and training only the best that the industry can offer.

On the other hand, the organization's advocacy and industry relations are best left to its arm, the Pana Foundation (Panaf). This year, the goal of the foundation is to further help the advertising industry through the annual integrated marketing communications creative competition. This competition is perhaps the biggest creative competition in the country attracting more than 1,000 students in attendance as contestants from many schools within Metro Manila.

Also, the foundation aims to have a speaker's bureau at the disposal of schools requesting for presentations and talks about Pana.

Pana has now been included in some educational tours of students coming from the provinces as far as Tagaytay area.

The Pana Foundation, under its own board of trustees, also has to its members not only current Pana company representatives but even former Pana members and officers who have served Pana completely useful and have gone into their own businesses. These are a pool of talent worth tapping.

So, for many of us in the 2006 board who are in their concluding year, we have only one year to do so. We will be able to bring about exciting less than what the organization deserves.

'We can't afford mass...

From page B1-1

man. You saw this opposite in the billboard ad Nebuchadnezzar in the Philippines? ("How you tested a 13-year old?") The ad message and execution is the case both high investment. But the ultimate-ad is typical of the awareness; it created is not exactly the kind of awareness you'd want for your company.

Gladwell's connectors, and salesmen

There are other issues on audits to using the Web hands. "What exactly are these Web contents creating opinion leaders?" is Malcolm Gladwell's first best-selling book, The Tipping Point. How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference, three categories of opinion molders were identified. The Connectors, the Mavens, and the Salesmen.

+ The Connectors are the networkers. They know a lot of people and have a big social network. They are the ones who "spread the news." Where do they get this news? They get this from the Mavens.

+ The Mavens are people who have information knowledge. They have the inside scoop on the marketplace and disseminate that information on their own. They like influencing others.

+ The Salesmen are persuasive. They have different products and prices or places." They are "educators" and information hunters but not persuaders. They do not create "buzz" but they sounds but for a "social epidemic in marketing ... some people are going to have to be persuaded to do something," says Gladwell. Enter the "Salesmen" or the persuasion.

+ The Salesmen are the select few whose persuade people who are already convinced need "they are the critical to the tipping of word-of-mouth epidemics."

Still another issue is that opinion leaders' Web contents always have to-face." In the 40s and 50s, opinion leaders resorted also to an "over-the-wall" fence discussions, the telephone and the "finger-to-eye" channel, i.e., the telegram. Today, these two channels have been replaced with the cellular network and "finger-to-eye" channel (the mobile phone's killer application's SMS) and the "internet-to-mouse" channel (the e-mail).

Brands suited for Web marketing

Does Web ads at Pana work effectively for all product categories? Not equally. It's more suited for some and less for others. There are no-no-no-nos when it's more appropriate because Web has the most credibility and risk in being media property to their purchase. The first of these is products that are expensive and infrequently bought. Consumers find themselves in more information and reassurance from friends and experts in the buying decision.

For your type of business, direct sales, is the most apt for word-of-mouth advertising. If your direct seller or agents are not spreading the news about your products, then you must examine their design. Pana, are you creating opportunities like product sales rallies where they could meet physically? Incentives or agents should also be provided users in order for them to obtain stories about your products to relate potential agents or customers. Second, is what Gladwell calls the "stickiness" factor. Ask yourself, are your brand features or benefits "sticky" enough to be talked about and passed on from one person to the next? If your product or brand doesn't create a positive experience that is worth the word-of-mouth, then it won't be worth being passed around by word-of-mouth.

E-mail questions to Marketing@yahoo.com or SLSet of MO to 4899314.1612. Got this?

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF KEPPEL PHILIPPINES MARINE INC.

Philippine Economic Zone Authority

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

LIFESTYLE
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Triple threat

Bench Body's newest model sings, acts and poses. And she's also one of Asia's Charlie's Angels

Criza Chela Bacal-Formoso

WELLD. Charlie Qu Yin, one of Asia's Charlie's Angels, is queen of Bench Body's newest pieces

BIG COMEBACK. Although Qu Yin took a break from modeling, she faced the cameras with ease.

By Pam Pastor

QU YIN, ONE OF CHINA'S HOTTEST model-actress-singers (okay, scary), was in town recently to do a photo shoot for Bench Body's new campaign in China.

"I chose Qu Yin because she's popular in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. She's a recording artist and actress but both movies and television. She also topped the survey we conducted in China. She's known even to the remote areas over there. And she can use products well," said Ben Chan, CEO of Bench.

Born in Yunnan, China, Qu Yin had always harbored a love for performing. Since childhood, the four-footer of being a star. Perhaps it was the influence of her parents—her mother was an ethnic dancer and her father an ethnic singer. "It just came naturally," she said in her native tongue.

Although she was also athletic as a teenager and was active in track and field, she followed her mother's footsteps and studied at the Hunan Province Performance School for Theater after graduating she joined The Hunan Province Theater Company. It was there that she faced her first setback. She was told she was too tall for acting. But, smart girl that she is, she found a way around the roadblock.

"I started practicing modeling instead and waited until I was successful before I tried acting."

The detour worked—today Qu Yin has over 10 movies and also a number of TV shows under her belt. Her role in Zhang Yimou's "Snap Cop" gained her international respect. And in 2005, she became part of the television series "Charlie's Angels-Asian Version."

Qu Yin didn't stop at acting. She has recorded five albums in the pop, jazz and techno categories. "I write my own songs as well," she said. She is especially proud of her last album, "Chain Reaction."

"I was given creative freedom. We used a lot of rap tunes," she said.

Professional

Because her biggest passions are acting and singing, Qu Yin abandoned modeling for a time. But Bench Body changed her mind and made her want to stand before still cameras again. "Bench Body is doing well in China. I'm familiar with their products. I like their changing fashion," she said.

At the photo shoot, it was not obvious that Qu Yin had taken a break from modeling. She faced the cameras with the ease and the skill of a professional and moved between outfit changes quickly and gracefully.

But does she find posing in her underwear difficult? She nodded and shook her head, saying that experience role that required her to wear little in front of the cameras had prepared her.

No doubt about it, Qu Yin takes her job seriously. It's a responsibility she said. "Whether it's singing or acting, I always make sure I'm doing my job well. I always challenge myself to make it better."

Besides, Qu Yin reads books, listens to music, watches movies and goes online. But this triple threat isn't looking for a chance since she obviously enjoys her work. "I like what I'm doing. It's a lot of fun. I like meeting new people. I like going to different places."

It was Qu Yin's first time in Manila and, sadly, she didn't have enough time to explore the city. "My intention was simple by the colorful jeepneys and by the men who serenaded us at the airport. I am one that Filipinos love music," she said.

Her first visit was over too quickly and she's looking forward to returning. "I'd like to come back to try the spas."

And would she be willing to sing a Tagalog song? "Why not? I think Filipino songs are warm and have a lot of heart."

Clearly, there's no stopping this triple threat.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

DASHING James Deakin and Tisha Cruz-Bautista

SISTERS Chino Cojuangco and Milaor C. Jaworski

CHILLING IT. Marites Barcelo and Pinoy Moreno

AMBASSADOR to Italy Philippe Lhuillier

FRENCH connection. French Ambassador Gerard Dussol with daughter Krista C. and wife Ning

Manila fetes global beauty salon

HEAVENABLE FACES. Toying Oregon and Carol Garcia

"LUXURY BEAUTY CANNOT BE DEFINED by culture, color or character. Its definition is as ubiquitous as the faces that depict it." This, pretargets, is the perspective that luxury-maker, the unmistakable Franck Provost, lives by. Its love for global beauty remains the secret of his huge success, dahlings.

From three salons, his shops now number over 600 worldwide with "a forecast to double that volume by the year 2010," would you believe?

On one of his jet-set visits around the world, the evil charismatic French Provost visited his Manille associates and business partners: chairperson Dr. Daniel Vazquez and his wife, Ising Madrigal Vazquez, and stalwart boxing Bobby Cruz, no less!

That evening the Vazquezes and Baby C. hosted an excellent dinner at the chic and trendy popular Kinabang and the Provost group gave a fab hair and makeup presentation.

The guest list ran from the young to the young-at-heart, dahlings: Ambassador to Italy Philippe Lhuillier, and elegant wife, Edna Diago; timeless designer Pitoy Moreno; Bindz Palmeda; lawyer Antonio Meer; former first lady Imelda Ilustrisimo-Marcos; Wying Dayrit and Carol Garcia. Dulce Bermudez; Teresita Libon and Chee Reyes; jewelries designer Krystal Henry, our town's young guards like sisters cuts, China Cojuangco and Milaor C. Jaworski; Bebi; and Miguel and Marivic Vazquez.

Stylish pals Billy Go, Kathy de Guzman and Basil Rimmauro hovered in late teh.

On a two night-out were Tonette Martel, Evie Cuesta, stylish Dandy Tanseco, Frannie Jackson and Jessica Dayrit-Lavides.

The French connection was headed by French Ambassador Gerard Dussol; French press attaché Gizelle Lucas, plus French honorary contingent.

Also there were Helen Tuchengco Bee, Georgia Tallo of Chez Roberto; hotelier Freddie Rances, Provost international manager, call Marc Aublet; D'Oral Paris representative, the chic charmer Pierre Ribbens with Ribbens's beguiling Villaruz.

As a special surprise, Franck Provost was serenaded with a "Happy Birthday" song. Guests received raffle prizes from Bindz Palmeda, Ivin Dee Jewelry, Jewellcom International, Xtend, Schwarzkopf, Beutique Manila, and Franck Provost, naturalmente!

SUSAN, Iyo and Albert Abo

HELEN Tuchengco-Dee

ANGY Bautista

Britannia steps in

One of England's favorite shoe brands has landed its coat dresses, pahangpin. Cinderella Marketing Corp. gives us Clarks shoes, which is becoming the fastest-growing brand in Asia.

All excited over the arrival of Clarks was Cinderella's hot VP for merchandising, bellkind Richelle Sanchez.

Describing it as "very internationally chic the high-quality leather of the brand, Clarks uses polyurethane, which has a lightweight cushioning material, making the shoes totally lightweight ready to wear, pahangpin.

Clarks launched its two-tone collection during the "Time Before Time" at the SM Megamall Bldg. and is now available at SM Megamall, Cinderella, Glorietta 2, and soon, at the S Mall Greenhills Shopping Center and the Mall of Asia.

MALOU C. de Venecia, Cinderella marketing director

SHOE-LOVER Roberto de Venecia

Italian resto gets face-lift

Cafe Cerano Ristorante Italiano on Paseo de Roxas, Bel-Air, Makati, opened its doors upon its facelift recently.

Hey, we could spot the change immediately. The new interiors are in Mediterranean colors, and for you guys who don't pity your lungs, there's a glass-enclosed function room that prevents the smoking area.

Salmon pink embroidered napkins complemented by the staff's uniform, add to a brighter atmosphere, pahangpin.

But the eye-catcher is the chi-chi bar, with rows of stemmed beige hanging from the ceiling.

The two talented Italian owners, signores Dante Gandini and Franco Martelloni, prepared a gastronomic feast for their invitees – yummy antipasti and different kinds of aperitif, cocktail, gnocchi and spaghetti.

The main dish of grilled fish, sliced beef tenderloin and veggie, baked in Italian oven-style, and to-die-for panettone, plus Italian wine to drown it all, dahlings.

Leading the hordes pack was the new Italian ambassador, Fabrizio Fedele, and luminaries of the local the Italian community, all regular diners of the ristorante.

Her namedroppables include Italian trade commissioner Giacomo Nicastro, businessmen Richard Colangelo, Stefano Sgarbi, Italian Armando Di Bessi, Rizzardo and Rinda Bonazzi, ABS's Gianfranco Rizzo Scelfo-Rivelli, Simone Tanaka, Andrea Menozzi, Michelle Fabio Gangeri, Emanuele Andrew Howard, Orlando Mercado, Roberto Natalini, Pasquale Sbarra of Coffee and Coffee Wines, and Montanari and Georgina Lombardo.

Digging into the excellent, unique new pizza that was being passed around were Victor Espero' Gina Fernandez and their absolutely lovely Dixie Malbasia, who were befriending with glamour pals like Becky Garcia cybilling it out for a while preparing for her wedding next month), and stunning beauties Michele Anderson and Bianca King, and Misty Green Sanchez.

BUSINESSMEN Dennis Literatus, Arthur G. Corvera, Cinderella CEO; Frederick Fores, Ellen Arthur, top exec; and Richelle Sanchez, young VP of merchandising for Cinderella

BABY Cruz and gentleman of the hour Franck Provost

LAURENT Hebert and model

SOUVENIR Flash with model

CHERIE Westbrooke Tio-Laurel

EDNA Diago Lhuillier with Ising Vazquez, and Offie Recto

LETTY Santos, Dina Jallorina, Angie Rodriguez, Chee Reyes and Bong Cruz

ITALIANOS of the hour: Cafe Cerano Resto's hotshot owners Dario Gandini and Franco Martelloni

RENATO Conti and Viviana Cuenco with the new Italian Ambassador Fabio Fedele

PARTYING glam pals Bindz Garcia, Jane Yu, Angie Henson and Jean Salvani

THE ITALIAN connection: Daniel Almazaidre, Desi Cuzon and Yolanda Almazaidre

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arnache
Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare

The march is on for super-value shopping

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Clover Chips
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Nabisco
Chips Ahoy
P130.50

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P22.75

Earth Flavors
P74.50

Edison

Colgate

Surf

Wings

Beauty for a cause

MB. PILIPINAS Charities, Inc., founder Stella Marquez de Arenas extends to the beneficiaries of the Charity Day at Fiesta Carnival.

THE RISING PILIPINAS Charities, Incorporated, (RPCI) founded by Stella Marquez de Arenas 42 years ago, has remained true to its promise of providing support and assistance to those in need.

Aiming to benefit orphans, indigent families, and victims of calamities, this non-stock, nonprofit organization has gone the extra mile.

In San Fernando, Leyte, the RPCI is working double time to provide relief goods for the affected people in the area.

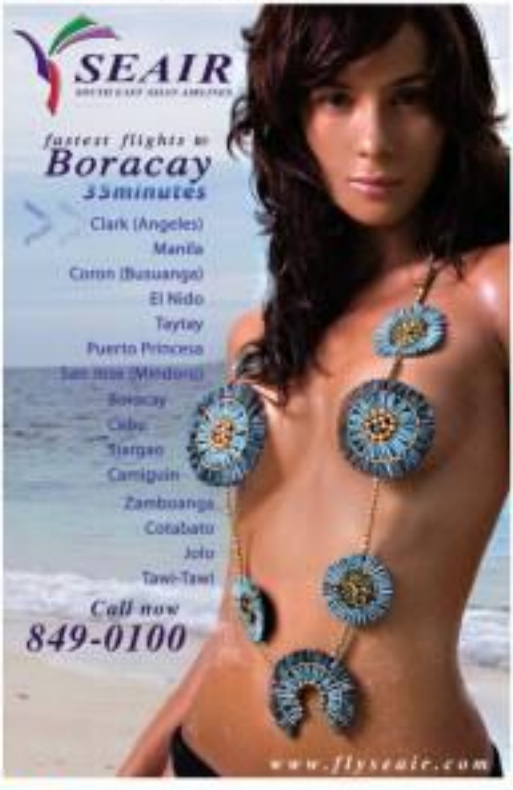
The recently conducted Charity Day held at the Fiesta Carnival in Cebu, Quezon City, benefited at least 500 underprivileged children from several Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)-linked centers.

The RPCI is also involved in providing medical assistance to wounded AFP soldiers at the Veteran's Hospital.

Through the years, funds generated from the beauty pageant have been donated to various orphanages in Metro Manila, calamity victims such as those affected by the Mount Pinatubo eruption, and indigent people. Educational scholarships and skills training classes have also been provided for the less privileged.

This year's pageant comes to its conclusion on Coronation Night at 7 p.m., March 4, at the Araneta Coliseum. The show will be aired over GMA 7.

BEAUTIES enjoy the carnival with underprivileged children from DSWD daycare centers.



Meeting on inner beauty

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LIFESTYLE

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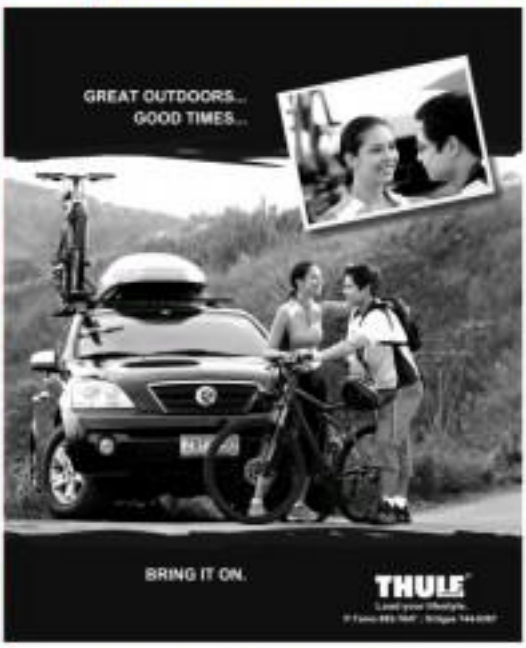

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A spring in your step

Lancôme ushers in spring with The Enchantress, a collection inspired by Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

By Ria Francisco-Prieto

ESTABLISH a good base before coloring your face.

THE WORLD ALWAYS looks reborn at the center of spring—a new year, the first rays of sunshine, the fresh blooms, and, of course, the latest beauty trends!

French beauty brand Lancôme ushers in spring with The Enchantress, a collection inspired by Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The look, a reminiscence of playful forms dancing in the garden and naughty pairs weaving magical spells.

The whimsical collection features the modern glamorous fairy—a beautiful and powerful woman, ethereal and mysterious. A woman as beautiful she is wild: sensual. The Enchantress combines an array of wondrous airy pastels and embodies the spirit of seamstress: a burst of shimmer on the face, a splash of color on the lids and sensual lips in pastel shades nude neutral. It's sexy.

Mikyjudo Bristow-de Leon, Lancôme's chief makeup artist, weaves her own spell as she interprets the look with easy-to-follow steps.

Face

When using pastel colors, focus on perfecting the complexion so the color doesn't have to work so hard. The trend of the season, though, is all about dewy skin. Mikyjudo recommends using a runny, satin foundation like Photogenic, which has sheer coverage and reflects light for a natural look. Brush all over your face and add a subtle hint of peach-pink blush.

Finish off with a burst of shimmer from Lancôme's Petite Brilliante, a loose shimmer powder housed in a portable container with built-in puff for easy touch-up, across all the face your nose to pull forward—cheekbones, temples, bridge of the nose and chin.

Avoid adding shimmer too close to the lines around the eye and too low on the apples of the cheeks as this can emphasize porous areas on the cheek. Ruby Jhee using the silver and gold powder for fair complexions, but the bronze shade would work best on warmer tones.

Eyes

Go for glamorous with pastel shades this season. Color Focus Palette 202 Enchanted Forest has five different shades housed in a three compact—coral, green, glittery black and white.

Build the colors to show the dimensions of each shade. Layering shadows over eyes in complement: one color by applying several others.

Abby used the shade coral all over the lids as base and added the green shade for luster. The glittery black shadow was lifted on the top of the lash line for definition, while white color was used as a highlighter under the brow bone on the outer corner of the eyes to make it pop.

Crayon Khol noir crayon pencil liner in silver was also lined on top of the eyes to soften the look. Layering a volumizing mascara like Hypnose is a nice way to make pastel colors stand out and create an enhanced look.

Lips

Ask glossy lips endure this season. Abby recommends using Sweet Balmlip treatment to make sure lips are moisturized, so gloss will only highlight chapped lips.

Apply a hydrating lipstick in peachy pink like La Rouge Absolu 306 and top this off with Lancôme's new Lip Gloss Juicy Tubes. This season, limited edition shades are available with shimmery or wet-look and fairy-dust sprinkled tubes.

Abby used Juicy Tubes 46 Dear Nymph, a sheer peach gloss with a glamlike effect on plump up lips.

cut & keep

LANCÔME juicy tubes to get that perfect pout

Summer sparks

Summer flings and hot shimmery shades for grabs

WHY SHOULD GUYS HAVE to look beautiful and effortless once? All year round, we should make a conscious effort to look our best. But always for looking summer hot, more importantly, for improving ourselves.

Forget almost natural. Go sexy, wild and adventurous. The look of the season is shimmer, shimmer, shimmer. But, as I said before, everything should be in moderation. You wouldn't want to look like a lighted bulb because of your too-shimmery face.

The trick here is to just choose a feature that you want to enhance. It may be your eyes, lips or cheeks. If you have shimmery eyes, go for toned-down lips and vice versa. If you want your cheeks to be the highlight, then eyes and lips should be neutral. The possibilities are endless. Just experiment and play with your makeup until you get that perfect look.

For our makeover model, I decided to focus on her eyes and give her that sexy, sophisticated look.

Base. Apply foundation you usually use. It is better to use one that is long lasting and waterproof. Try Maybelline's Pure Zone Liquid Foundation. It blends well with the skin and you look like you are not wearing any base at all.

Since it a liquid foundation, it is very important to dust it off with loose powder to set the makeup.

Eyes. This is one part of your face where the skin is veritable love. A tiny dab of shimmer on either the inside corner or in the very corner of the eyelid gives sparkle to the eyes. Sweep a dark-hue shadow over your lid and blend it carefully into the crease. Then apply mascara over your used on your upper lid to your lower lashes to accentuate the shape of your eyes.

Whereas black eyeliner is usually too severe for daylight looks, it is perfect for chic glam looks. Using a pencil is easier so, specially for beginners. Draw a fine line above and below your lashes. A good eyeliner to try is Fashion 25. If you want a more dramatic line, try Revlon's Blue Grass Liquid Liner in Carbon Gray. It is smudge proof and carrot proof. After applying the liner, sweep a pearlescent shimmery shadow on your brow bones. Don't forget to apply mascara.

Cheeks. Tawny blushers or bronzers are ideal for this look as the neutral color won't compete with your eye make-up. Sweep it over your cheek bone.

Lips. Keep the lips neutral. Opt for pinkish beige shades or lip pencil and smudge it over your entire lips for an understated tanned effect.

And don't forget your hair, too. Wavy hair is making a big comeback that's why a lot of people flock to salons to have their hair permed. If you don't have the guts or salon time big heap of faith and change your hairstyle, try using curling irons or braiders.

It is safe and temporary to try the journey. Have fun and love it.

BEFORE

AFTER

cut & keep

Lovely lilac

This color is surprisingly very easy to wear once you find the right shade for your skin

IF YOU ARE THE TYPE WHO likes blues and purples, then you must be a dreamer who can't stand the sight of eyeliner in any form.

This line has an aura of intrigue and mystery. People who wear this color are self-contained and highly creative individuals.

Lilac is a very feminine color. It is ideal for summer day wear. There are so many shades to choose from, from dusky lilac to sultry plum. Lilac is surprisingly very easy to wear once you find the right shade for your skin.

For rule of thumb is, don't overdo the color. Always wear neutral cheeks and lips to balance the look. Pure cheeks and lips of your face. But your mind be enlightened.

Eyes. Apply a sheer lilac base from the tone of your upper lid up to the brow bone. This will even out the color of the lids. A good brand to try is Maybelline Color Whet Glitter in Glitz'en Purple as the Color Whet Trio Eye Shadow in Trio-Indulgence. These eye shadows can either be matt wet or dry.

To enhance and give the eyes the dramatic look, apply a deep purple matting on the outer corner of your eyes going inside. Always remember to apply sparingly for you don't want to look like you have a black eye.

Try Maybelline's Trio Eye Shadow in Winter Touch. This palette complements the tones I created. Blend for the eye base because they are in the same color family.

Cheeks. If you decide to use purple on your cheeks, use the shades of berry and just dot on the apples of your cheeks. This color usually works well on olive and medium toned skin. If you are on the fair side, you can still use this as long as you apply sparingly or first time gradually build up the color. Try Elm Cremsan in purple or red.

Lips. Same with the cheeks, a berry-colored lipstick when applied with a finger will give a stained effect. But for a very sophisticated look, apply straight from the tube to the lip.

PERFECTLY blended eye makeup

A CLEAN canvas makes makeup a breeze.

Vavoom summer hair

WELLA Color Saver shampoo

MARCH SIGNALS THE COMING of the Spring collection in the United States and Europe, and the coming of the poolside big boat of summer to the Philippines. That time we are expected to be less glamorous and more refreshed? First on the agenda: the salon rounds.

Tend and Curl at 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati. My deep wave-colored hair was crying out for remedy as the hair roots were about two inches visible. The new salon called for lighter hair, so I headed myself to Toni and Guy's. The room was cozy and quiet plus it had a laptop computer equipped with lovers, so I could go on working while Nita planned my new look. I barely felt the time go by as I was savoying on with luscious via anti-corrosive and anti-damaging—it was undoubtedly the most productive salon trip I ever had!

The salon were by Wella and I had a medium golden brown hair color with fun streaks of bright red and rich gold, which instantly made me glow even when hardened. Upon leaving I was given Wella shampoo for color-treated hair and a leave-in conditioner to help the color set for two weeks. Immediately I tried testing the product the very next morning. I was surprised at how Wella's quality has improved since I last tried it two's decade ago. The quality can actually compete with more flashy hair product brands.

MAKEOVER 911

Emmy Salas

For inquiries on the hair color and Wella products, call Toni and Guy at 8116556 MKL/VIS.

Salon de Ken. Wow, would a change of venue be without a hair-raising experience? I, of course, sought the expertise of Louis Philippe Ken, who, with his magic scissors and technique, made my hair look so much thinner, people automatically thought I had lost between 5-10 pounds or had gotten taller. He kept my hair long for bravery so I would have enough hair while maintaining the size of waist-and-west. This is why I have stayed faithful to the guy for easy 10 years now.

Since I am already there, I could not resist the Chinese foot reflexology by Joey and the shoulder and back massage by Mimi. I walked out of there refreshed and ready to tackle the world.

Most have been requesting for the Joey foot reflexology and Mimi neck, shoulder and back massage while waiting for their spouses to finish. Some have even gone back on their own accord once wife or girlfriend.

Contact Salon de Ken at 843 2886.

Mendon Body and Face. I just settled into the new branch in D'F Goldcrest Makati beside Glutenos. I became I was long overdue for more cravings have removed. My aesthetician was Emmy, a very calm mannered woman who oozed with slow precision. She assured my eyebrows to perfect clean arches that did not even require trimming, and my upper lip smooth in quick painless swipes. The tint was same with the Brazilian bikini wax. There was more expensive than the usual ones I have read before at P1,200, so I was ready to be enlisted. The big surprise was that it was painless and required minimal stopes to clean everything out.

Get better that may have been responsible for this, aside from Emmy's very light hands, was the fact that my monthly had just finished, so I had no water retention whatsoever and the hairs were still short as the micropus from my last wax was three weeks old.

My favorite among the bags of hair goodies, of course, is Tone Revolution. This wonder cannot try already this hair to get greasy and full, as I make sure I treat myself to the Aromival anti-hairloss treatment (P1,750 for 30 visit, and Hair Preservation Shampoo, P1,850. Bear in mind though that if you are already bald, it won't help your hair grow back. This is only for those with thinning, falling hair to restore the original thickness.

Aromival products are available at the 6764 Jupiatan location and several salons all over Metro Manila.

Paseo De Santa Rosa at Greenfield City: The Country's First Outlet Supercenter

Planning a quick trip to the mall? Well, forget about malls, crowded halls and those eye-popping price tags. At Greenfield City's expanding commercial landmark Paseo De Santa Rosa, it's all sales for money shopping as it offers loads of great, quality finds, delectable food choices and unique entertainment for all.

A Super First!

Paseo De Santa Rosa takes pride in being the first outlet supercenter in the country. Successfully embracing a popular concept in the United States, it provides the perfect venue for shoppers to purchase top quality goods at discounted prices. Just hunt for great items at super brand outlets like Nike, Adidas, Puma, Sperdo and more.

Plus, it offers a wide variety of options for enjoyment not only for the shopaholics but also for the whole family.

There is Never A Crowd

As more and more people made Paseo De Santa Rosa is the preferred shopping, dining and entertainment hub, additional stores and food outlets are deemed inevitable. Thus, it paved the way to the construction of Paseo 3.

The soon-to-be completed Paseo 3 conveniently extends existing valued offerings of Paseo 1 & 2 yet giving them a new twist with a unique array of food finds, apparel and accessories.

More Choices at Low Prices

With the opening of new shops along the new strip of Paseo 3, shoppers are in for a wealth of choices of international brands at reasonable prices. We need to search high and low or wait for a great sale for to get you favorite sporting gears, trendy apparel and exciting finds. Just visit Paseo De Santa Rosa and you'll surely get more choices and better deals.

It's Worth the Trip

Now, a favorite hub for shopping, dining and entertainment in the South, Greenfield City's commercial landmark is sure to draw an even bigger crowd of shoppers as it is nestled just a 45-minute drive from Manila. Easily accessible and away from the hustle and bustle of the metropolis, Paseo De Santa Rosa is definitely a choice shopping destination.

Paseo De Santa Rosa lies in the heart of the master-planned Greenfield City, one of Greenfield Development Corporation's mature projects in the South of Manila. It serves as the retail and commercial component envisioned to become a town center that provides a better shopping, dining experience to cater to varying customers' tastes and preferences.

To know more about Paseo De Santa Rosa, please call 420-8003 or (049) 541-2845, email marketing@greenfield.com.ph or log on to www.greenfield.com.ph.

3 Days of Fun Shopping at Four SM Supermalls!

Grab the discounts and promo offers at SM Southmall Las Piñas, SM City Manila, SM City Pampanga, and SM City Iloilo on March 3, 4, and 5.

The month of March comes with a welcome harvest of value buys for shoppers at four SM Supermalls.

Get up to 50% off on great choices mallwide. Merchandise on sale include apparel, home furnishings, appliances, supermarket staples, novelty items, toys, baby basics, sporting goods, I.T. equipment and gadgets, and more.

3 day sale

mar 3. 4. 5

up to 50% OFF

great selections mallwide

WIN JVC

The Perfect Experience

mall hours: 10am-10pm

SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS | SM MANILA | SM PAMPANGA | SM ILOILO

WIN NEW AUDIO!

A total of 32 units of **JVC XA-NOS00 Digital Audio Players** are at stake in the raffle events.

Every P500 purchase at any mall establishment gives shoppers the chance to win.

Whichever among the four SM malls you shop at, you can win a new JVC audio appliance.

SM Southmall Las Piñas

15 units can be won at five units per day on March 3, 4, 5 at 9pm.

• **Techie Hub** For you techies out there, hop on over to our **Cyberzone,** the coolest place to surf the net. Get wired to the latest gadgets and gizmos and get addicted to the latest mobile phones. All these are up for grabs at SM Southmall Las Piñas.

• Check out and on the upper ground floor.

SM City Manila

10 units will be drawn at 10pm on March 5.

• Don't miss out on Food Music Zone at the lower ground floor, a popular hangout for food and music lovers.

SM City Iloilo

10 units are up for grabs with the following schedule: on March 3 at 2pm, 6pm, 10pm. On March 4 at 2pm, 6pm, 10pm. And on March 5 at 12nn, 3pm, 6pm, 10pm.

SM City Pampanga

15 units can be won at 9pm on March 5.

• This very popular mall in San Fernando continues to attract thousands of customers everyday. It now offers an exciting array of sale items for 3 days!

Experience the new SM Cinemas. Its luxurious seating, great sound and wide screen facilities invite mallers to relax and enjoy the latest movies in airconditioned comfort.

Offering a variety of specialty food counters, SM Foodcourt is the ideal place to take time out from bargain hunting and replenish your energy before you shop some more in the mall.

My swept away must-have is. . .

The little black dress because it's idiot proof.
–Cindy Kurleto, MTV VJ, actress/ wild elephant observer

My antique charm necklaces worn layered. It looks good with everything and makes my neck look longer.
–Daphne Osena, F TV host/ war photographer

Heirloom jewelry because wherever I am, it will remind me of my family.
–Maureen Dizon, stylist/dirty dancer

Accessories, the ultimate style savior

Basic pieces get a fashion boost with this season's accessories

THESE ARE TRYING TIMES for our poor, battered nation. I'm sure that the last thing on most people's minds is the hottest fashion trend or the 101 incarnations of the LBD. I, for one, am having difficulty writing about sartorial, potentially superficial concerns when such uncertainties abound.

Apples' Pickings

Apples Aberin-Sadvasi

However, my wise editor once told me that life goes on and I must, in my own small way, strive to uplift others' lives through my passion for fashion. So, in the midst of all this, here I am writing my weekly column and dreaming of a united, progressive Philippines.

Having said all that, let me turn your attention to the importance of accessories in updating your basic wardrobe or season-old pieces. We've not all been with a stress specialist in our petty little months. Unlike the Albees or Milan jokers, most of us don't have the luxury of a total wardrobe change every six months. Probably not even every six years!

Practicality is the name of the game so it's vital to know what pieces you'll need to take your wardrobe from one season to the next. Investing fashionably does not always translate to big bucks.

The former line is this: Accessories can provide an effortless, enjoyable and affordable way of expressing yourself and creating a more versatile wardrobe.

But as always, choose items that will suit your personality, body type and age. And never follow trends if they don't suit you. You can't go wrong if you're simply yourself.

E-mail the author at afa.home@inquirer.com.ph

Naughty call

A mischievous shot of navy in virginal white can bring a whiff of the ocean to any city wardrobe. Zara shows you how

From page B4

subtle option is ditching the stripes and going for blue-and-white printed tops to go with your solid whites. Or, make navy your dominant color, with splashes of white for accent.

And if you insist on going solid white head-to-toe—bless your dry-cleaning budget's soul—do it with aplomb. White works best with a one-hued complexion, so no matter that it comes from a bottle, do get a tan. Looking ghostly pale in summer white is a no-no.

Spring's chain-white frocks go perfect with bright neons (fireberry and, hottest season yet, white, bright red lips and neatly slicked back hair or a generous look. Pale gold accents also break the monotony of an all-white group.

Now stop abused and yell, Ahoy!

E-mail the author at cmorel@inquirer.com.ph

Chic watch

Pleasure beige cruise holiday suit, summer pile necklaces and wooden earrings. Beverlee luggage

Swept away

Whatever life throws at you, always remember, 'gepang' with style!

From page E2

products? Out of season? How can a true Chick Wheel even consider wearing neutral with her polka cobalts—I mean, her Greenock?—without first applying Elec Lemon 378. Pearson 678 to the x x x.

And to newness spare fishing and rain wearing, she would have to review her season and refresh her skin with Elec Lemon Surgeon Wash and give her hair the curls that's tested protection with The Jubril Collection. From Kitsmart.

At nights, after a long day of rolling under the sun lotion, and sunbathing and island-hopping, and posing like class spa courtesans and fashion harlot, the Sun Maiden's mantra of after-sun care should include Sha Lemona Compass Therapy Skin Softening Toner and Cooling Gel Cream.

Because in the end—or should I say, in the sun—of your fun-filled summer day, your sidekick remained behind and your long strands of wooden beads won't win any You Young Thing—not if you're not in appendages.

I mean, look at Madonna, Amber. She was starving and got curbside and physically shamed besides. She lets her grooming un-impeccable.

Appreciate the finer things in life.

And what would a Chick Wreck be without the right accessories? Nothing but a clutch of a woman crying out for a glossy wicker or a delish bag, the same way a shipwrecked man would wail, "Water!"

And so, a personalized Monique Jeanpierre with a dog tag? I should keep her company while her dock Motorola SF09 cell phone reminds her of all her pal friends back in the city.

A luxe accessories brander by Chalet Bertin Simmers and Michelle Rising member Jael Dandrel invites, a Kwakuman Slipper Bag holds her own, sweet Sip Bags, and in her future in-Trini-tions 2006 Planner, she makes a list of all the goodies that are here for the taking at Kamil's temerity exquisite Mediums boutique—Creations by Azmin Ismail and Mia Villarimo; a Chalet in a Box by Wendy Pomeroy; Lounged Lee by Celine Lopez; and Michele Bimm or Nikki Sings.

And just when you thought you were all alone in this tropical paradise, behold! Coming 'round the corner is your very own Diane Quilon, ready to cater to your every whim, for it is massage, your favorite cocktail, 22 flavors of ice cream, etc. Your very own genie in a bottle, 24/7. Namaste!

And the hotel Mitz Hotel executive chef Colin Gobet in the hills, every meal was truly Lemon Grand, with yummy Asian and Western dishes—everything from Tom Yum soup to honey bonbon chicken—making me devastated to go home.

Select the swimwear

Who knows what days spent on soft white sand and crystalline blue seas will bring? A serial love affair, perhaps? A spa-cation, life-altering realization? A night of wowing Thai royalty, maybe?

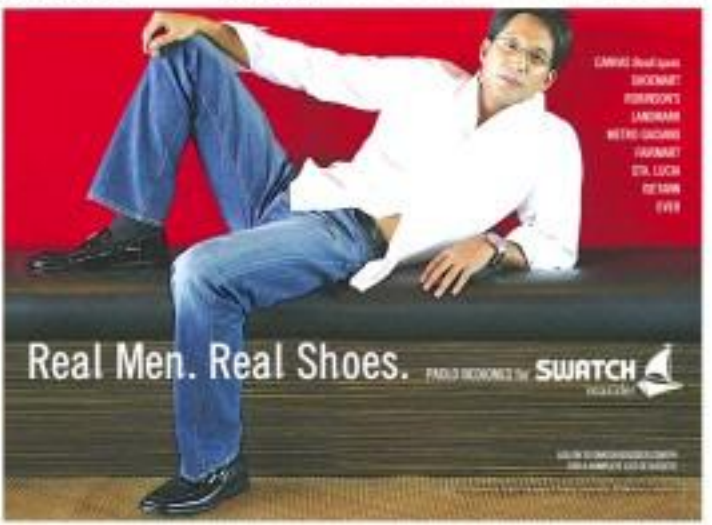
Whatever life throws at you is crappy haircut, an over-trapped chest, or a Colombo ankle with a very dark branch, always remember, gepang with style!

PAM CHUNG, Beauty!

For more information on Hotel Bermuda check www.hotelbermuda.com, or contact the Mitzvah Reservation Office: tel. 8121484/ 8920373, fax 8120860, or the resort directly at (876) 2886753/55.

E-mail: fashion@trinpost.com.jm

Monsoon Cosmetics bracelets, gold bangles, silver and natural bag necklaces, Blu Jeanne Blue Pearsed Eye Shadow, Sweet Lip Gloss in Daisy, Sweet Pinch Glow-Tint in Ripe Kiss, Organa Water in Mint, Polo Blue for Her Rouge Creme, Kenneth Cobonpue Nido Peninsula, Ralph Cool, Polo Blue for Men



Swept away

Survive summer's heat with beach essentials to keep you cool and cute

MADONNA CAN DYE HER hair in every color of the rainbow, wear brassieres that can kill, even kiss Britney Spears, yet she'll still be one hot mamita who can do no wrong.

Well, almost. Once upon a time, she dreamed of "keep it together in the family" and star in husband Guy Ritchie's ill-fated, critically massacred film, "Swept Away," playing bored rich bitch with Adrien Leighton.

The one is Disastrous Dior Movie History (you anyone spell "Dillon"?). I'm not going through the plot event. Instead, let me proclaim that, yes, the movie sucked, but hell, Blackness looked damn good in it—she beat dreamed Chick Wreck I've encountered in the celluloid scene.

Jessa Epperson

with her perfectly mussed-up beach hair and skin a radiant bronze, stepping away a wet black sweater to reveal a chic black bikini and black linen drawstring pants.

In other words, "Kathi" gagagong or kabagad ako, bahalâ na nah at mag-ilgill ng coleg. I think, and always will be... footyne."

So here dive our answer—and no-nive—the role of Chick Wreck! Set four contained, sun-sprayed days in the paradise that is Island Resorts, Seraseas bottles of champagne and Swedish massage, we found out how:

Survival of the chic-est

Underwaisted trunk, absolutist priorities.

Swiss knife? Sunday. Waterproof watch-es? No-bias. A modest of skin and hair care

SWEPT 12

MOTOROLA

How many MOTOSLVRs can you see?

Text your answer to 2955 for an instant discount and a chance to win ultra slim prizes

To send your answer just text the following:
MOTOSLVR COUNT < Answer >
Ex. MOTOSLVR COUNT 50

For the Raffle, just text the following to join and register:
To Join: MOTOSLVR IMEI < IMEI No. >
Ex. MOTOSLVR IMEI 012456789012345
To Register: MOTOSLVR REG < full name > / < complete address > / < gender >
Ex. MOTOSLVR REG Jon Tan/1 Road St., Pasig City/F

So start texting! Promo runs from February 20 to March 31, 2006!

VISIT ANY OF MOTOROLA'S AUTHORIZED DEALERS FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Naughty call

By Charlie V. Meral

WHITE IS TAKING OVER fashion in a major way this resort season, and for the many who are infinitely bored to the daily grind of the city, the color's pristine coolness is just the welcome gust of freshness to douse the blistering urban heat.

Of course, in one's rising to style you into thinking dressing, no, mimic ideas white dress can substitute for sexually hanging by the poolside while sipping a tall glass of pina colada, or being sprayed with ocean water on a bobbing about a yacht. (Goodness knows the upkeep of a white gown of garments is hardly anyone's idea of a holiday anyway!)

But, hey, you gotta take any form of respite where you can get it. And what's the chicest way to do that than through your summer wear?

White is a summer staple, and so is a strip or swirl of cerulean here and there. A mischievous shot of navy in virginal white can bring a whiff of the ocean to any wardrobe. Aye, aye, many nautical-inspired fashion can be your virtual escape from the metropolis!

The workload at your desk may not exactly approximate sailing but, but why should it stop you from looking like you're ready for a regatta?

Top off your white pants with a navy pin-stripe shirt. Better yet, don a pair of tailored city shorts, which are dominating the spring-summer radar right now. Go for a Bermuda-length, or a pair that crushes your knees, as going any shorter may be deemed unacceptable in most workplaces.

It's business as usual when you finish it off with a white jacket...and a little something red, say, a scarf, for a shot of color, perhaps?

Ideal color cocktail

And, white and blue are the ideal nautical cocktails, especially for a more casual look. A little red accent in the form of a belt or a scarf or pair of loafers can make all the difference. Large gold button accents are also key.

But, of course, who says you have to be quite literal with this sailing fashion thing? A

NAUGHTY 12

LOOK: fresh and feminine in a pristine white bubble dress.